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# THE REALITY OF ISLAM ACCORDING TO ISLAMIC SOURCES

*WITH GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLING MUSLIM CONVERTS*

REV. DR. ZAKARIA BOTROS

2018

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# Dedication

To my most beloved Redeemer, Jesus Christ, the incarnated God;

To the memory of my late wife, Violet, who helped me along the strenuous journey of our ministry;

To my daughter Janet, and my sons Fayez, Benyamin and Peter who supported me with their prayers;

To the Muslims who are seeking the Truth,

I dedicate this work.

May our Mighty God be glorified.

# Preface

This study is focused on sharing the Good News with Muslims and is based on decades of continuous research and evangelism to Muslims. I was called to this ministry after losing my elder brother, Fouad, who was killed in 1948 by a group of radical Islamists. Since the 1950s, I have been evangelizing through publishing books, setting up Internet sites and a pal talk program (chat room), and countless one-on-one encounters with the sole purpose of bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Muslims. In 2003, the LORD gave me a new platform, and I began airing the Gospel on Satellite TV that reaches out to the world.

I will be discussing a number of approaches on how to reach out to Muslims with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and will share some stories on how millions of Muslims have turned to Christ and accepted the message.

The first step of evangelizing Muslims is removing the obstacles that prevent them from accepting Christ. Some of these obstacles are:

The Trinity
The Incarnation
The Crucifixion
The Validity of the Bible

After removing these obstacles, there are strongholds that should be destroyed that prevent Muslims from accepting Christ. These false beliefs include that:

Mohammad is a prophet of God.
The Quran is a revelation from God.
The hadiths are inspired by God.
Jibril is an angel of God.
Allah of Mohammad is the true God.

The target of this approach is to shake the foundations of false beliefs and get Muslims to think objectively about the faith they have inherited so that they will be open to receive the message of the Gospel, accept Christ as their Lord and Savior, grow spiritually and serve the Lord.

I pray Muslims will find the Truth and be saved. I also pray that this book will serve as a guide for those who have a heart to evangelize among

Muslims, equipping them with practical methods to use as they share the Good News.

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# Introduction:
# PRINCIPLES OF EVANGELIZING MUSLIMS

## Jesus' Great Commission

Jesus' Great Commission to His followers declares, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). There are two commands in this statement. The first is to preach the Gospel to the whole world, restated in Mark 16:15 as "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." The second is to make disciples.

Elsewhere, Jesus tells his followers about His plan to bring "other" sheep into His flock, saying, "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd" (John 10:16). When commissioning His followers over two thousand years ago, Jesus undoubtedly foresaw the current times in which we live and have the opportunity and challenge to "go and make disciples" among Muslims. The Great Commission is our commission.

### God's protection

Taking the Good News to Muslim countries is life threatening. Oftentimes, missionaries evangelizing in Muslim countries encounter persecution or even death. The task is impossible without the protection of God.

The Lord has repeatedly promised to protect missionaries.

> "For I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city." (Acts 18:10)
>
> "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But not a hair of your head shall be lost." (Luke 21:17-18)
>
> " 'They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you. For I am with you,' says the LORD, 'to deliver you.' " (Jeremiah 1:19)

### The Holy Spirit's support

The work and power of the Holy Spirit are fundamental to fulfilling the Great Commission. Therefore, Christ comforted His disciples saying,

"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but stay in the city of Jerusalem until you are given power from on high" (Luke 24:49). He also told them, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

This is the greatest help God has given the disciples and has continuously been giving missionaries throughout history. That is why we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit and depend on His power as we take the Gospel to Muslims.

## Preaching the Gospel to Muslims

The research contained in this volume is founded on over fifty years of evangelism to Muslims. I will begin by briefly sharing why I am burdened to reach out to Muslims and explain the deep motives that encourage an evangelist to accomplish this mission. Then I will focus on the purpose of evangelism and follow with some recommendations concerning style and strategy necessary to achieve this sacred task of evangelizing to Muslims and winning them to Christ Jesus.

### Motives

There are several factors that affected me and led me to evangelize to Muslims. It all started in August 1948 when my elder brother was killed by a group of radicals from the Muslim Brotherhood, an Islamic sect, after sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them. I am grateful that, by God's grace, I have lost all the anger and bitterness I once felt towards Muslims. In fact, my heart is burdened to minister to them so that they can be saved from the darkness of Islam that consumes them with hatred and revenge.

My eyes were opened to the importance of this ministry early on in my life. My father carried this great burden of encouraging and helping converted Muslims. My dad went as far as to open our home to them; and since my childhood, I have had the opportunity to witness, firsthand, Muslims coming to Christ and being saved.

I had an experience during my secondary school years that God used to prepare me for this ministry. One of my teachers continuously challenged





me and often embarrassed me in front of my colleagues by openly defying my Christian faith and raising doubts about the Trinity and the incarnation. When I quoted verses from Bible in response, he would question the validity of the Bible. This prompted me to study these topics in the Quran so that I could defend my faith. His attacks brought about the excellent result of planting the seed of intellectual apologetics in my mind and heart.

There was another transition in my life in which I moved from defending the Christian faith to exposing the false beliefs of Islam. God used a famous Egyptian novelist and playwright, Tewfik El-Hakim, to introduce me to the reality of Islam, the Quran and Mohammad the prophet of Islam. This inspired me to pursue a deeper understanding of the validity of Islam.

My real motive is a deep, sincere love to bring the Good News to Muslims: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Jesus loved sinners and brought the Good News to them. In Mark 2:17, we are told, "I [Jesus] did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

### Ultimate intention

In 1 Corinthians 9:22, the Apostle Paul writes, "To the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

My ultimate intention is to glorify God and bring people to Jesus, especially Muslims, whom I look upon as victims of Mohammad who deceived them just as Satan deceived him. Muslims still believe that Mohammad is the best prophet, the Quran is the only authentic book from Allah and Islam is the only religion from Allah. Muslims are in deep need to be saved from these false beliefs.

Another purpose behind this study is to share some practical tips on how to preach the Gospel to Muslims, based on my many years of experience of one-on-one and group encounters with Muslims; and on experience I gained through research, publishing, hosting radio programs, communicating through the Internet and presenting television programs.

In fact, the ministry of preaching the Gospel to Muslims in the traditional way of face-to-face encounters may be life threatening. Christians who live in the Muslim world need to be very cautious about evangelizing to Muslims because it is forbidden by Islamic shari'a law.

On the other hand, Western evangelical endeavors to Muslim countries do not see the success expected. This is because of the vast difference in culture, language and mindset between the East and the West. Many missionaries do not fully understand how culture plays a key role in the formation of the Muslim mentality; and Muslims often link the Western evangelist with imperialism.

Muslims are imprisoned in darkness, distanced from the light of Christ. Worse, there has been a surge in radical Islamic movements such as the Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Turkey, Hamas in Palestine, Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Yemen, Khomeini in Iran, Hezbollah in Lebanon and ISIS in Iraq and Syria. All these movements present a radical approach (modeled by Mohammad the prophet of Islam) that breeds terrorism in hope of restoring Islam to the glory of its "good old days" in the Age of the Prophet, the Caliphates and Islamic Conquest.

This new wave of terrorism reached America in the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon. Countries like Britain, France, Russia and Spain have not been spared the ravages of Islamic terrorism. The traditional methods of war used by the U.S., U.K., Australia, Canada and Europe have not succeeded in tempering this terrorist worldview. They have spent millions of dollars and lost hundreds of soldiers, yet their efforts have not brought terrorism to an end.

The words of Saint Francis of Assisi (13th Century) who opposed the wars of the Crusaders proved to be true: "You cannot overcome evil with evil but with love; and weapons cannot be a means to goodness because weapons kill the oppressor and the innocent alike. But love saves all." Saint Francis urged his disciples to invade the whole world peacefully and preach the Gospel everywhere."[1]

The Muslim world today is thirsty for this message of love and salvation. Muslims who come to know Christ are freed from the power of anger and





hatred. Instead of posing a threat to the peace of others, they become a spiritual blessing to others.

Although it is not possible for me to evangelize to Muslims in the conventional ways, the Lord has opened a new door for me to preach to Muslims through satellite TV and the Internet. I started an online ministry, followed by a TV ministry in 2003 that has continued to grow until today. I pray this message will keep going out until all Muslims who are searching for the Truth find the way. This ministry has been made possible through programs such as *Questions about Faith*, *Fi Issamim* (*Straight to the Point*), *Dialogue about Truth*, *Search for Truth* and *Knowing the Truth*, which are aired through several satellite channels in the U.S.A., Canada, Mexico, Europe, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and all over the Middle East.

A famous researcher named Joel Rosenberg in his book, "Inside the Revolution,"[2] in which he touches on evangelism through the means of satellite television and radio, writes, "Father Zakaria today is the evangelist with the greatest audience and fame in the entire Muslim world."

I thank God who has caused this ministry to grow and bring forth fruit exceeding anything I could have ever imagined. This same writer attested, "Many leading Arab evangelists I interviewed for *Inside the Revolution* said that they believe God is using Father Zakaria Botros to help bring in the greatest harvest of Muslim converts to Christianity in the history of Christendom."[3]

**Style and strategy**

Evangelizing to Muslims should be conducted with respect, patience, wisdom and love.

*Respect*

We should respect Muslims to win them to Christ. Let's always keep in mind that we are not against Muslims, although we are against Islam as a false religion. We do not want to disgrace Muslims, but rather to expose Islam in order to bring them to the Gospel. In our discussions, we should discuss Islam objectively, not subjectively. 1 Peter 3:15 tells us, "Be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."

*Patience*

Preaching the Gospel to Muslims is not an easy task. According to the Quran, Muslims are the best nation in the world and have the absolute truth. This explains why Muslims refuse to listen to any message other than the message of Islam. We need to have the virtues of patience and longsuffering as we preach to them the Gospel of Christ.

*Wisdom*

We should approach Muslims with wisdom to reach their hearts with the Gospel. Because Muslims are not prepared to accept the message of love and salvation, much foundational work precedes offering the message of Jesus as Savior. There are four strategic stages in evangelizing to Muslims:

1. Apologetics: Removing the obstacles that stand between Muslims and their salvation
2. Polemics: Exposing Islam
3. Evangelism: Presenting the biblical message of salvation through Christ
4. Discipleship: Following up and teaching what Jesus commanded

These four stages are the core of this study. The first stage, Apologetics, will be discussed in Part 1; the second stage, Polemics, will be discussed in Part 2; the third and fourth stages, Evangelism and Discipleship, will be discussed in Part 3.

*And the greatest is love*

The Bible tells us that God made Himself known by becoming one of us. In the New Testament, Jesus is God Incarnate, as He took on the form of a human being.

> He, "being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men." (Philippians 2:6-7)
>
> "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory." (1 Timothy 3:16)





The apostles followed Jesus' example, as the Apostle Paul exemplifies.

> "For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." (1 Corinthians 9:19-22)

This sets the example of sacrificial love in ministry. Everyone called to evangelize to Muslims is called to a life of practical love in order to draw them through love to the person of Jesus Christ our Savior.

## The Incredible Impact of this Ministry

I will mention only a few examples of how God is working among Muslims to describe the great impact of this ministry.

### Testimonies of converted Muslims

There is nothing like personal stories told by real people about the transformation God has brought about in their lives. Muslims from countries such as Saudi Arabia have boldly given their full testimonies on live television and shared their journeys from the darkness of Islam to the Truth of Jesus Christ.

### Published books and articles

One of the greatest fruits is that Muslim authors are publishing books and articles disapproving and critical of Islam, such as

- *The Fall of Islam*, a book by Dr. Hamed Abdel-Samad which discusses the end of Islam[4]
- "The Death of Islam," by Wafa'a Salma, in which she explains that Islam is surrendering and succumbing to a bloody Allah created by Mohammad to rule the Arabs, and whom the Arabs are using to rule the world[5]

There are many other books and articles published along these lines.

### TV shows and books

Islamic scholars and theologians on TV have often responded to my programs with weak arguments and defenses of Islam, giving me multiple opportunities to use their arguments to further expose the reality of Islam. Their superficial responses backfire, and many Muslim viewers lose their faith and realize that Islam is a false religion and decide to leave it.

### Islamic media

Instead of attacking and criticizing Christianity, for the first time in modern history, Islamic media is criticizing Islam. For example,

- Rotana TV presenter, Mrs. Hala Sarhan, criticized adult breast-feeding.
- Orbit TV presenter, Mr. Amr Adeeb, discussed several topics of my TV programs, for example, "The Distortion of the Quran."
- Iqra' TV presenter, Mrs. Basma Wahby, in her program, *Before the Judgment*, criticized capturing women in war and making them concubines.
- Many enlightened Muslim writers are exposing the reality of Islam on their websites, for example, *Civilized Dialogue* www.elaph.com.

### Responses of Islamic scholars and theologians

Some scholars and theologians have begun to criticize the validity of the hadiths, while others have dismissed the whole of the hadiths. The King of Saudi Arabia, King Salman bin Abdul Aziz, has appointed a council of Islamic theologians to delete from the prophet's hadiths all the texts that bring shame on Islam.

Scholars and theologians are also amending Islamic fundamentals that have been well established in Islam for the past 14 centuries, such as the "Beautiful Names of God." Based on the episodes I presented on TV about the horrible names of Allah, Al Azhar University amended these 99 names by deleting 29 ugly names and replacing them with 30 more attractive names.

Among all of Allah's 100 revised names, there is nothing close to "God is LOVE."





### Reaction from Muslim viewers

TV programs stimulate Muslim viewers to think and ask some core questions about fundamental beliefs. However, Islamic scholars fail to offer responses that satisfy their questions – especially for young people, which leads many to realize that the Islam they believed in was not what they had signed up for, and they decide to quit.

### Muslims disgracing the Quran

A Muslim regards the Quran as Allah's inspired Holy Book. However, after watching some of my programs about the falseness of the Quran, a number of Muslims have lost their respect for it. Some of them have been tortured and others killed for openly defying the Quran. For example, a pharmacist in Saudi Arabia used to take a copy of the Quran to different mosques and defy it publicly. He was sentenced to death for challenging the Quran.

Other Muslims in several Muslim countries have dared to express their disbelief by burning the Quran. In Saudi Arabia, authorities found thousands of discarded copies of the Quran. They arrested some people they accused of tearing the book and discarding it. Videos of these incidents are posted on the Internet.

### Islamic scholars lament the exodus from Islam to Christianity

In 2005 Sheikh Ahmad El-Qatani, Islam's most famous preacher, provided shocking but valid statistics of the numbers of converted Muslims on Al-Jazeera.[6] He mentioned that the annual number of converts from Islam to Christianity was about 10,000 converts in Algeria, 45,000 in Morocco, 50,000 in Saudi Arabia and 6,000,000 in Africa. For more statistics from Muslim sources on Muslim conversions, visit http://www.aljazeera.net/Channel/archive/archive?ArchiveId=89376.

Joel Rosenberg, American author and researcher, cites on his blog a global census of believers in Christ from a Muslim background that concludes, "From 1960 to 2010, the number of Muslims that have converted to faith in Jesus Christ has grown from fewer than 200,000 to some 10 million people."[7] Father Mitch Pacwa reports on "big numbers of conversions" among Arabs as a result of my television and Internet ministries.[8] And reporter Raymond Ibrahim affirms my motive – "to draw Muslims away from the dead legalism of sharia to the spirituality of Christianity," my

method of asking questions arising from Islamic sources and inviting Muslim scholars to respond with supporting evidence, and the effectiveness of this method in "evangelizing many of the six million Muslim converts every year."[9]

***

I give all praise and glory to our Almighty God, our Lord and our Savior, because there is continuous conversion from Islam, more thirst for the Bible and more Muslims accepting Christ.

## Islamic Culture and Language

The great majority of Muslims are not encouraged to use analytical skills when it comes to religion and trained to accept what the sheikhs tell them as the absolute truth without arguing about it. Many Muslims are ordinary people absorbed day-to-day in securing the basic survival needs of life such as food and housing for themselves and their families, while the more rooted Muslims, such as the sheikhs and Islamic governments, are concerned with spreading Islam to attain worldwide dominion.

Many Muslims emphasize appearances and are very concerned about public opinion, so they portray an image of "righteousness," most evident in publicly observing Friday prayers on street corners and fasting Ramadan. The "Pillars of Islam," five rituals mentioned in the hadiths in multiple formats, were established by Mohammad.

> "The messenger of Allah said, 'Islam is established on five; A declaration that there is no god but Allah, that Mohammad is His slave and His Messenger, Prayer, Zakat [giving alms], Al-Hajj [pilgrimage] and Fasting (the holy month) Ramadan'."[10]

Many Muslims are faithful to Islam as a religion with its rituals, traditions, principles and even its Shari'a law. Islam is not a message of salvation, new life in Christ or the work of the Holy Spirit; thus, even the more devout practicing Muslims remain slaves to their lusts and corrupt sinful nature and fail to change themselves. They do not love the "other" but hold grudges that often lead them to persecute and sometimes murder, as is the case with Al Qaeda, ISIS and other radical Islamic groups. These





teachings proceed from the Quran and hadiths of the prophet Mohammad. An average Muslim may be peaceful, but when he gets deeper into the study of Quran, being radicalized is inevitable.

Some Muslims suffer poverty, and many Muslim countries are poor and under-developed. Population increase and limited resources are factors contributing to poverty. Even oil-rich countries have a small privileged upper class while the masses suffer some degree of poverty. High birth rates, polygamy and lack of planning continue to cripple these countries.

Muslims have mixed feelings about the West, often connecting it with imperialism. They see potential imperialism in evangelists and missionaries from the West, but try to mask these concerns in order to enjoy favors such as humanitarian aid and immigration opportunities.

As for language, the order of a sentence in the Arabic language differs from the order in Latin languages. For instance, in Arabic the adjective comes after the noun, so we say, "The man tall." A big chunk of everyday conversation in colloquial Arabic consists of idioms. The extensive use of idioms means that translating word-for-word makes no sense. For example, a word-for-word translation of an appeal made by a former employee to his boss goes like this: "Why do you cut my bread? I am running over my mother and I am on iron." He is actually saying, "Why don't you let me keep my job? I am responsible for my mother and I am broke."

Missionaries need to learn about culture and language to communicate and preach the Gospel to Muslim Arabs. Arabic is the language of the Quran, and Arabic and the Quran cannot be divorced. Translating the Quran makes it lose a great deal of meaning since it contains a lot of idiomatic Arabic; Quran translations only give part of the meaning since there is much wealth in the cultural aspect of the language.

***

Despite Islam's unique defining characteristics, the Bible has one answer: to draw everyone, including Muslims, to the person of Christ.

# Part 1:
# APOLOGETICS:
# Removing Muslims' Doubts About Christianity

# OVERVIEW

Those who are born and raised Muslim are continuously exposed to the teachings of Islam. They find it hard to accept Christ as their Savior because they struggle with false beliefs about Christianity. In Part 1, I will share what I have discovered through my research about how to confront and demolish the following false beliefs about the Christian faith so Muslims become open to the Truth.

**God in a Trinity**

Muslims assume that Christians have three gods, so refuse to engage with them. They are totally opposed to the concept of three gods, and a common question is "Which of the three gods are you referring to?"

**The Incarnation**

Muslims believe that Christians worship a human being – Christ, and cannot accept the incarnation of God in Christ.

**The Crucifixion**

Some verses of the Quran lead Muslims to believe that Jesus was not crucified, but that someone else who looked like Him was crucified in His place. This belief stops Muslims from partaking in the salvation made available to them through the Crucifixion.

**The Validity of the Bible**

Muslims believe that Jews and Christians distorted their holy books, so they guard themselves against what they call "falsified Scriptures."

**The False Gospel of Barnabas**

Muslims believe that Jesus prophesied about the coming of Mohammad, the prophet of Islam. They find this prophecy in the so-called "Gospel of Barnabas."

# Chapter 1: THE TRINITY

## The Meaning of the Christian Doctrine of the Holy Trinity

Christians believe in one infinite God who has no equal and who fills the heavens and the earth and is the creator of all; He is eternal before all creation and everlasting with no end to His Kingdom. This doctrine is clear in the New Testament and in the Nicene Creed: "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible."

The Lord Jesus clarified this when some people asked Him about the greatest commandment. He said, "The first of all the commandments is, 'Hear, O Israel; The Lord your God is one Lord' " (Mark 12:29). The Apostle Paul said in Romans 3:29, "Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also." James stressed this doctrine when he said, "You believe that there is one God. You do well" (James 2:19).

In these verses and many others, the doctrine of one God is clearly stated in the New Testament. As well, the Church has recited in the Creed for many generations, "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible." Evidently, Christians believe in one God and not three gods.

The Christian doctrine of the Trinity, by no means, teaches that there are three gods. The concept of the Trinity is that the one God is self-existent, expressing Himself through His Word and alive through His Spirit.

*God is Self-existent*

This means that God is a being with a self. He is not just an idea without a presence. In fact, this presence is the origin of all existence. God declares His presence as "Father" because He is the source of all existence.

*God and His Word*

God, who is self-existent, is an intelligent being who expresses Himself. He is not a silent God. God expresses his mind through His Logos, meaning, "The Word." In Arabic, a person's words are often called "the daughter of the lips."

*God is alive by His Spirit*

God gives life to all people, so how can He Himself be without a Spirit? This is God's Spirit.

### The origin of The Trinity

The Trinity is not man-made or man-explained; it is revealed in the Holy Bible through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said to His disciples, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). The One God is clearly referred to in "baptize them in the Name." This means "in the Name of the one God." He doesn't say, "in the Names (plural)," because we do not believe in three gods.

The Trinity is explicitly stated as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Apostle John writes in 1 John 5:7 (see NKJV), "There are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, The Word and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one." This is the Trinity.

### The Trinity is one

The above proves that there is a Trinity in one God. The one God who created all cannot be Himself without self-existence. The epistle to the Hebrews tells us, "But without faith, it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

If man who is created by God is an intelligent creature able to speak, isn't God, the Creator wise enough to speak? That is why the Bible says in John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Is it possible that God, who created life in every living being, be Himself without life?

It is therefore necessary that there is a Spirit in the one God. This is the Holy Trinity, and this is the true faith of Christianity: God is one in the





Trinity and not three gods. That is, God is one in Himself and has His own attributes: being self-existent (The Father), Mind or "Word" (The Son), and Life (The Spirit).

## How Islam Views the Christian Trinity

### The Quran testifies to the Christian belief in one God

The Quran testifies that Christians believe in one God, that they don't raise anyone else to the position of God and that they are not infidels.

> "And do not argue with the People of the Book [The Jews and Christians] except in a way that is best, except for those who commit injustice among them, and say, 'We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you. And our Allah and your God are one; and we Muslims, are in submission, to Him'." (Sura Al-Ankaboot 29:46)

Thus, the Quran attests that Christians, the "People of the Book," believe in one God.

> "They are not [all] the same; among the People of the Book [The Jews and Christians] is a community standing [in obedience], reciting the verses of Allah during periods of the night and prostrating [in prayer]. They believe in Allah and the Last Day, and they enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and hasten to good deeds. And those are among the righteous." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:113-114)

> "You will surely find the most intense of the people in animosity toward the believers [to be] the Jews and those who associate others with Allah; and you will find the nearest of them in affection to the believers those who say, 'We are Nasarah [Christians].' That is because among them are priests and monks and because they are not arrogant." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:82)

It is clear from these quranic verses that Christians ("Al Nasarah") are not polytheists. While the idolaters and the Jews are considered the greatest enemies of Muslims, Christians are considered more akin to Muslims.

> "When Allah said, 'O Isa [Jesus], indeed I will take you and raise you to Myself and purify you from those who disbelieve and make those

> who follow you [in submission to Allah alone] superior to those who disbelieve until the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me is your return, and I will judge between you concerning the issues upon which you disagreed'." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:55)

From all these verses we see that the Quran conclusively attests that Christians are not infidels and that they are not idolaters.

### The Quran testifies to the Trinity

The Quran clearly confirms the Trinity – God's Self, God's Word and God's Spirit. Here is the heart of what the Quran says about the Trinity:

> "O People of the Book! Commit no excesses in your religion: or say of Allah aught but the truth. Christ Jesus the son of Mary was a messenger of Allah, and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him." (Sura An-Nisa 4:171)

From this verse, it is clear in the Quran that God has Self ("of God"), Word ("His Word") and Spirit ("Spirit proceeding from Him").

Sura Al Fatiha 1 says, "In the name of Allah, the Merciful and the Compassionate." Let us examine some of the valued commentaries and interpretations about Al Fatiha.

> Al Qurtubi comments, "This verse explains all the conditions because it deals with the Self and the qualities and this is so"[11] and this is in agreement with what Hamed Al Sayed Ali said.[12]
>
> Al Nawawi in his discussion of *Sahih Muslim* writes, "My vocalization of the words: the merciful and compassionate, expounds all the qualities of Self."[13]

### Islamic schools of speech testify to the Christian Trinity

The Islamic schools of speech, comparable to seminaries in Christianity, attest to the Trinity.

> The *Sunna*: "That Almighty God is one in Himself and there are no divisions in Him and He is One in His eternal unmatched attributes."[14]
>
> The Mu'tazila: "The attributes are nothing but the Self; they are the Self, or the status of the Self."[15]





> Al Khawarij: "The Christian Trinity is a Spiritual Trinity and it doesn't mean that God had a wife with whom he had a child."[16]
>
> Sufis: Al Ghazali said that Christians believe in the Self of God and His qualities: "God's qualities are eternal within Himself."[17]
>
> The Shaffi'eh: "Some attributing to God eternal qualities, do not differentiate between the qualities of the Self and the actions of Self."[18]
>
> Al Wasiliah: The friends of Wassel Bin Atta, a disciple of Al Hassan al-Basari: "The Self has two qualities: knowledge and power and they are two attributes of the core self, and all other qualities spring from these two."[19]
>
> The 12 Shiite Imams: Dr. Mohammad E'marah said, "The 12 Shiite Imams are in agreement with Mu'tazila and Al Khawarij that God Almighty is one and the same and that His qualities are self-appointed."[20]
>
> The Asha'ra (belonging to Abi El-Hassan Al Asha'ri): "God has unchanging qualities, among them is that He is alive and expressive. These qualities are in Himself. So, they are different from the Self. But they are within the Self. It is not possible that the Self be alive without life, and to be knowing without knowledge…and it is incorrect to say that the qualities are the Self as much as it is incorrect to say that they are not the Self and thus the qualities are permanent in the Self and constant within the Self."[21]

This is how different Islamic schools of speech view God's Self. While in Islam the attributes of Allah are contradictory and incongruent with one another, the God of the Bible is the same yesterday, today and forever, and His qualities are in perfect harmony with His nature.

Muslims as well as Christians agree that God is one in Himself and threefold in His qualities of self: Existence, Mind and Life.

### Islamic scholars testify to the Trinity

It is clear from the Quran and the writings of Islamic scholars that God is a being and must have basic self-qualities, without which, He cannot have an existence at all. Below are some examples:

*Islamic Encyclopedia*: "It must be that God is Knowing for His Self and His Qualities."[22]

Al Fara' (Mu'tazila), a disciple of Al Kassa'y: Multiple attributes do not conflict with the one God. "The concept of being omniscient differs from the concept of being omniscient and existent. It is easy to say that the existence of different attributes in God is one of the fundamentals of Islam, so how can Christians be considered unbelievers? In the one God there must be multiple qualities."[23]

Prominent Islamic website: "Ibn Sina says, 'God Almighty is a Necessary Existence. He is rational, sane and reasonable, without multiple selves. He is rational because He is abstract of Material. He is sane of Himself, and reasonable for Himself'."[24]

Abu Bakr Ahmad Al Shahristani writes, "God who is the Necessary Existence for rationalism, sanity and reason makes sense in Himself and His attributes. He does not require multiple selves in His Self."[25]

Thus, the Quran, Islamic schools of speech and Islamic scholars agree that the Trinity is one God and He has a Self, a Word and a Spirit. There is no polytheism in The Trinity. We believe in one God and none other.

## The Titles of the Trinity

Christianity believes in One God in a Trinity that reveals God's essential attributes. They are known as The Father (Love of God), The Son (Word of God) and The Holy Spirit (Spirit of God). These titles have led some Muslims to believe there is an implication of reproduction caused by a sexual relationship. Nothing can be further from the truth! I will clarify the concepts behind these titles.

### The Father

Christians do not use the word literally. "Father" has metaphorical, symbolic, legal and spiritual meanings.

According to the metaphorical meaning, God is designated the Father of creation because God the creator is the source of life for all living beings. For example, Moses rebukes the Israelites, saying, "Do you thus deal with the Lord, O foolish and unwise people? Is He not your Father, who





bought you? Has He not made you and established you?" (Deuteronomy 32:6). The prophet Isaiah says, "But now, O Lord, You are our Father" (Isaiah 64:8). In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul declares, "Yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live" (1 Corinthians 8:6).

The symbolic meaning may be expressed as "Father of goodness," "Father of blessing," "Father of grace" and so on. It is not to be taken in a literal sense of His giving birth or having physical descendants.

The word "Father" also has a legal meaning. In adoption cases, the word "father" does not indicate the literal sense of "he has begotten a son," but rather that he has accepted the adoption of a son and given him full legal rights. He considers himself responsible for and committed to his adopted child to fulfill the role of the biological father. The Apostle Paul says, "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father' " (Romans 8:15). Also in Galatians 4:6, "And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!' " So, God's fatherhood to us is adoption, not of a physical biological nature.

The word "Father" also has a spiritual meaning. After the Holy Spirit is poured out in the hearts of those who believe, they are born again through baptism in spiritual rebirth and renewed by God's Spirit. Thus, we see the fulfillment of "Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13).

Jesus Christ teaches us to pray, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name" (Matthew 6:9). Thus, according to Scripture, no one has the right to be called a son of God unless he receives the adoption and the anointing of the Holy Spirit. And this adoption does not have any physical implications.

*The likeness of Father and Son*

The fundamental Father-Son likeness is similar to the relationship between fire and light. Fire creates light naturally; and because of this we say in the Creed about the Son, Jesus Christ, that He is "light from light" and "of the very same nature of the Father." This claim is in perfect agreement with Hebrews 1:3, "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and

the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word." It also negates all allegations of the physical or material connection between the Father and the Son.

It is clear that Christians do not believe in a physical fatherhood of God in a natural biological sense.

**The Son**

When we say "Christ, the Son of God," we do not mean that Christ is the product of a physical biological relationship. Christianity does not mean by the word "Son" that there is a physical relationship. Rather, "Christ, the Son of God" means that Christ came from God. God is Spirit, so Christ the Son is of the same nature as His Father, exactly like light that naturally comes from fire, as previously mentioned.

The word "Son" has been used in Arabic literature, the Quran and the hadiths in this sense without any indication of reproduction, as evidenced by the many idiomatic Arabic expressions using the word "son" that do not imply a physical act, for instance: students – "sons of learning," patriots – "sons of the nation," Egyptians – "sons of the Nile" and Bedouin – "sons of the desert."

The word "son" in the Quran is repeatedly used in contexts without meaning a physical biological sense, for instance: "They ask you what they should spend. Say: Whatever good you spend, is for parents and kindred and orphans and the needy and to the son of the path" (Sura Al Baqqara 2:215). Islamic scholars call travelers "sons of the path." Imam Nasfi says, "They call him "son of the road," because of his connection to the road"[26] and so does Sheikh Huseinain Makhlouf.[27]

Thus, the expression "Son of God" does not imply a physical birth in the human sense. Rather, the meaning intended by this expression is the connection between Christ and God. The point I am making here is that when Christians say Jesus is the Son of God, they do not mean a physical biological relationship. There is no heresy or polytheism because the sonship of Christ from the Father is spiritual.

**The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. I will quote a few references to God's Spirit from the Quran and from the exegesis of Islamic Scholars.





*The Quran testifies to the Holy Spirit*

"Go, O my sons, and find out about Joseph and his brother, and despair not of relief from the Spirit of Allah. Lo! None despairs of the Spirit of Allah save disbelieving folk." (Sura Yousef 12:87)

"And we gave Moses the Book and we sent after him messengers and we gave Issa [Jesus] the son of Mary the Book and We supported Him with the Holy Spirit." (Sura Al Baqarah 2:87, 253)

"Remember My favor unto thee and unto thy mother; how I strengthened thee with the Holy Spirit." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:110)

*Islamic Scholars testify that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God*

Imam Al-Nasafi: "The Holy Spirit means the sacred Spirit...or the name of God the greatest."[28]

Imam Al-Tabari: "Ammar told us that bin Abi Jaffar said: 'The Holy Spirit is the Lord Almighty'."[29]

Imam Al-Tabari quotes Ibn Zaid: "We supported him by the Holy Spirit, meaning God said that He supported Issa [Jesus] by His Spirit. He also added: God is described: The Holy one...Allah. Exalted is Allah who there is no god but He, the Holy King, and said: The holy is the Holy One."[30]

Imam Al-Tabari also quotes Ata Ibn Yasser: "The definition of God is that He is the Holy."[31]

Ibn Abbas, Saeed bin Jubair and Obaid bin Amir: "Allah is the name of the greatest, by this Christ brought the dead back to life, and people saw those wonders."[32]

Al-Mawardy quotes Hassan, Al Rabe' and Ibn Zayd: "Holy is God, so Issa [Jesus] was called the Holy Spirit, because God let him be born without a father."[33]

Abdul Karim Al Jabali: "The Holy Spirit is uncreated and the uncreated is eternal, and the eternal is no one but God."[34]

Sheikh Mohammad Al Hariri Al Bayoumi: "The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God and the Spirit of God is not created."[35]

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This is the Holy Trinity in one God that the Christians believe in:

The Father is the Love of God.
The Son is the Word of God who appeared in the flesh.
The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God.

## The Rejected Trinity

### The trinity Muslims reject is the trinity of the Mariamites

In the 5th Century AD, before Islam, a group who had been worshippers of Venus embraced a pagan cult inspired by Christianity. They replaced Venus, whom they called the Queen of Heaven, with Virgin Mary, and referred to her as the Goddess of Heaven; and thus they took for themselves the name "Mariamites."[36]

From this heresy arose a doctrine of three gods: God the father, Mary the mother and Jesus the son. However, this doctrine is completely contradictory to the Christian faith.

### The response of the Church to the Mariamite trinity

The Christian church resisted this heretical cult and its teachings and forbade it from becoming part of the fellowship of faith, cutting off anyone who embraced its teachings.[37] By the end of the 7th Century this cult had completely disappeared except for a few followers scattered throughout the Arabian Peninsula.

The church reaffirmed its holy faith that Virgin Mary is a human being and not a goddess; that God is one and He has one Self and He communicates through His Word; that He is alive by His Spirit and that His Word was incarnated through the body of Christ. "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16).

### Islam's response to the Mariamite trinity

When Islam emerged in the 7th Century AD, there were still some followers of this cult; however, Islam fought their doctrine and their false trinity, not the true Christian Trinity. For example:





> "Did You Issa [Jesus] son of Mary tell the people: take me and my mother Mary as two gods in place of God?" (Sura Al-Maeda 5:116)

This is a clear objection to the Mariamites who called Mary a goddess, which is contrary to the Christian faith. Ibn Katheer also says about Sura Al-Maeda 5:116, "God said, O Issa [Jesus] son of Mary did you say to the people take me and my mother two gods without God, he (Issa) said, 'Praise you, O Allah'." Al Sidi says, "This verse was inspired because there were those who made Issa and Mary two gods thus making God one of three."[38] Ibn Katheer says, "Don't say three, meaning, don't make Issa and his mother two partners with God. God is above this, high above this."[39]

We understand other verses to be specifically objecting to the Mariamites' belief that Mary is a goddess who became the wife of God and gave birth to a son through normal reproduction. It is a trinity based on God having a wife and this is not what Christians believe.

> "O splendid one of the heavens and earth, how can there be to Him a child when he doesn't have a wife?" (Sura Al-Anaam 6:101)

> "Say that Allah is one, He is unchanging. He wasn't born, and He doesn't give birth and there is no one equal to Him." (Sura Al-Ikhlas 112:1-4)

> "They have blasphemed who say that God is third of three for there is no god but One God." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:73)

> The Jalalayn say about Sura An-Nisa 4:171, "Do not say three" meaning God, Issa and his mother."[40]

It is clear that Islam does not battle the Christian belief that God is one with One Self, who communicates through His Word and is alive by His Spirit, as confirmed in Sura An-Nisa 4:171: "But Issa Al Masih [Jesus Christ], the Son of Mary is a messenger from Allah and His Word and the Spirit from Him." Rather, Islam disputes a different trinity, the trinity of the cult of the Mariamites that deifies Virgin Mary and makes her into a goddess who became pregnant with a son and brought him forth in a normal reproductive fashion after God Almighty took her as a wife.[41] In fact, Christians strongly reject and condemn these concepts and whoever

taught them. The true Christian faith is a faith in one God in a Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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By displaying these facts to a Muslim, we remove the first obstacle against evangelism.





# Chapter 2: THE INCARNATION

## Christ is God Who Appeared in the Flesh

Muslims wonder how it is possible that God would appear in a human body or in some physical form. In this section, I begin examining the incarnation by discussing the belief that Christ is God who appeared in the flesh from the viewpoints of both Christianity and Islam. In subsequent sections, I discuss other aspects of the incarnation, namely the belief in Jesus as the Word of God Incarnate and Christ as the Son of God Incarnate.

### The Christian understanding of Christ's incarnation

*Christian doctrine about Christ's nature*

Christianity teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ had a dual nature: human and divine. From the human perspective, He was perfect and had a full human nature without sin. Christ Jesus ate, drank, got tired, felt pain and slept just like any human would; but He was sinless. This is Christ's human nature according to the Christian faith.

Christianity also teaches that the Spirit of God (i.e. His divine nature) dwelt in and was made manifest through Christ. Thus, we believe that "His divine nature is one with his human nature yet without mingling, confusion or alteration."[42]

> "[Christ] is the image of the invisible God." (Colossians 1:15 and see 2 Corinthians 4:4)
>
> "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word." (Hebrews 1:3)
>
> "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh…." (1 Timothy 3:16)

So, the Lord Jesus is a perfect human without sin, in whom God's divine nature was made manifest.

To present this from a Christian perspective, let's refer to the sayings of the Coptic Pope Cyril Amoud Al Din,[43] who used this simple illustration to explain the complex issue of the two natures of Christ:

> "The unity of the divine and human nature resembles, for instance, the placing of metal in fire; while shaping the metal using tools. Each of the fire and the metal retains its characteristic nature. And when a hammer hits the metal, it does not affect the fire or hurt it.
>
> "This unity is maintained between the human and the divine nature of Christ. The Word of God is not impacted by pain, but the body is which is raised from the dead on the third day. Thus, pain and death did not affect the Word of God." [44] [45]

This metaphor makes it clear that the indwelling of the divine nature in the body of Christ is like the metal being shaped while in fire. The divine nature is united with the physical nature without mixture or blending and without change, to where the divine is not physical, and the physical is not divine.

*The burning bush as an illustration*

The story of God appearing to the prophet Moses in the burning bush in the wilderness and speaking to him gives us a clear picture of the incarnation of God in something physical. This narrative, with all its details, is mentioned in both the Bible and the Quran. I will discuss this story firstly as it appears in the Bible and then in the Quran.

> "Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. Then Moses said, 'I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.' So when the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then He said, 'Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place





> where you stand is holy ground.' Moreover He said, 'I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God." (Exodus 3:1-6)

**The Islamic understanding of Christ's incarnation**

I have previously shown that the Christian faith is built on Jesus, who is God made manifest in a human body. Let's examine the Islamic viewpoint on this belief. What does the Quran say about this specifically and what do the most respected Islamic scholars say?

*The Quran testifies to the appearance of Allah in a physical form*

The Quran testifies that Allah will appear in a physical form on "the day of the resurrection" as evidenced in the following passages.

> "Some faces that Day shall be shining and radiant. Looking at their Lord (Allah)." (Sura Al-Qiyama 75:22-23)
>
> Ahmad bin Hanbal quoting the prophet says, "Allah will remove the veil and they will see Him. Allah hasn't given them anything so loving as to see Him with their eyes."[46]
>
> Tabari quotes Obay bin Ka'ab who asked the prophet of Allah about the reward for those who do good, and he answered, "the best of beautiful paradise is to look at the face of Allah."[47]
>
> Ibn Katheer quotes Jabir: "Allah appeared to the believers laughing."[48]
>
> *Sahih Muslim*: "A Chapter about the proofs that believers will see Allah Almighty in the hereafter."[49]
>
> "And your Lord has come and the angels, rank upon rank." (Sura Al-Fajr 89:22)

All these verses of the Quran testify to the appearance of Allah in physical form.

> Al Tabari quotes Abu Huraira: "As we were standing we heard from heaven a loud voice, by which, we were dismayed; and the people of heaven came down to the lowest heaven. And they took their places and we said to them: 'Is Our Lord with you?' they said, 'No. But He is

coming.' Then the people of heaven went down to the second heaven and they took their places and we asked, 'Is Our Lord with you?' They said, 'No. But He is coming.' Then the people of heaven went down as far as they could because of weakness until the Mighty One came down in the shade of the clouds."[50]

"Do they then wait for anything other than that Allah should come to them in the shadows of the clouds and the angels?" (Sura Al-Baqara 2:210)

Ibn Katheer in his *Exposition*, quoting Abdallah bin Amr: " 'Will they see when Allah comes to them in silhouetted clouds?' He said: 'He descends when He comes down and between Him and His creation are 70,000 veils, among which are light and darkness and water; and the water will make a sound in that darkness, a sound that will take out the hearts.' Al Waleed said that he had asked Zuhair bin Mohammad about the saying of Allah, 'Will they see Him when Allah comes to them in the shadow of clouds,' The prophet explained: 'Silhouetted clouds are made of sapphire and peridotite'."[51]

From the hadiths: "Abi Huraira quoted the prophet who said, 'Allah blesses the devotees when on the Day of Resurrection, He comes down to spend time with them'."[52]

"The Day the shin will be uncovered, and they are invited to prostration, but the disbelievers will not be able" (Sura Al-Qalam 68:42). The exposition of this verse is found in the compiled work of Ahmad bin Hanbal, quoting Abu Huraira: "The people said: 'O Prophet of Allah will we see our Lord on the Day of Resurrection?' The prophet said: 'Will you be hurt when you see a clear sun?' They said, 'No, O Prophet.' Then he said: 'Will you be hurt to see a full moon without clouds?' They said, 'No O Prophet.' So he said, For you will see him on the Day of Resurrection thus Allah will gather the people and say whoever worshipped a thing, let him follow it, whoever worshipped the sun, follow the sun, whoever worshipped the moon, follow the moon and whoever followed the tyrants, follow the tyrants and there are hypocrites in this nation so Allah Almighty will come to them in an image they don't recognize and say, 'I am your Lord' They say, 'we seek refuge in Allah from you. This is our place





until our Lord comes to us for if our Lord comes we will know Him.' The prophet said, Allah Almighty will come to them in an image that they know and will say, 'I am your Lord and they will say, 'You are our Lord and they will follow Him'."[53]

According to the book *Al-Raowda Al-Nadya*, "...everyone who denies that Allah will be seen on Judgment Day, is an atheist."[54]

Thus, according to the Quran, people who did good deeds will see Allah on the Day of Resurrection.

*The hadiths testify to the appearance of Allah in a physical form*

The discourses of Mohammad, the hadiths, state that Mohammad saw Allah in this world incarnated in the form of a young man.

From the story of Bin Abi Daoud and Al Tarmazi, quoting Ibn Abbas, who said, "Mohammad saw his Lord. I said: 'Human eyes don't see Him but He can see all.' He said, 'Woe to you if He appeared in His light that He emanates.' And he said: 'I saw Him twice.' Abu Issa described it as 'a reliable discourse,' and what Abu Abbas meant by 'His light,' is 'His Divinity'."[55]

From *The Names and the Attributes*: "The prophet said, I saw my Lord frizzy and smooth wearing a green suit."[56]

From *The History of Baghdad*: The prophet said, "I saw my Lord in the form of a young man in a red suit."[57]

From *The Treasure of the Workers*: "I saw my Lord in the image of a young man with thick hair, hair on the head, dropped to or exceeded the earlobe."[58]

Al Muttaqi Al Hindi, quoting Zira'a's comment: "I saw my Lord in a field of paradise as a young man wearing a crown that shines brilliantly,"[59] said, "This is an authentic discourse."[60]

We easily conclude from this evidence that the discourses of the prophet attest to the incarnation of Allah in human form and seen by human eyes.

*The Quran and hadiths testify to the manifestation of Allah behind the veil*

In Sura Ash-Shuara 26:51, Allah appears from behind the veil saying, "And it is not for any human being that Allah should speak to him except by revelation or from behind a veil."

Ibn Katheer explained the verse: "Behind a veil as He spoke to Moses, peace and prayer be upon him."[61]

The story of Moses when Allah appeared to him behind the mountain in Sura Al-Araf 7:143: "And when Moses arrived at Our appointed time and his Lord spoke to him, he said, 'My Lord, show me [Yourself] that I may look at You.' [Allah] said, 'You will not see Me, but look at the mountain; if it should remain in place, then you will see Me.' But when his Lord appeared on the mountain, He made it ruins, and Moses fell unconscious. And when he awoke, he said, 'Exalted are You. I have repented to You, and I am the first of the believers'."

Galal El-din Al-Sioty quoting Abi Hurairah who quoted the prophet: "When Allah appeared to Moses, he was seeing an ant in a very dark night 30 miles away."[62]

"And when Moses had completed the term and was traveling with his family, he perceived from the direction of the mount a fire. He said to his family: Stay here; indeed, I have perceived a fire. Perhaps I will bring you from there [some] information or burning wood from the fire that you may warm yourselves. But when he came to it, he was called from the right side of the valley in a blessed spot – from the tree: O Moses, indeed I am Allah, Lord of the worlds." (Sura Al-Qassas 28:29-30)

We notice here that the voice Moses heard came from the blessed valley, from the bush, and this is attested to and repeated in Sura Taha 20:9-13:

"Has the story of Moses reached you? When he saw a fire and said to his family: Stay here; indeed, I have perceived a fire; perhaps I can bring you a torch or find at the fire some guidance. And when he came to it, he was called, 'O Moses, Indeed, I am your Lord, so remove your sandals. Indeed, you are in the sacred valley of Tuwa [the





name of the Valley]. And I have chosen you, I am Allah, there is no god except Me, and worship Me'."

This is further confirmed when Moses says to his family,

"Indeed, I have perceived a fire. I will bring you from there information or will bring you a burning torch that you may warm yourselves. But when he came to it, he was called: Blessed is whoever is at the fire and whoever is around it. And exalted is Allah, Lord of the worlds. O Moses, indeed it is I – Allah, the Exalted in Might, The Wise." (Sura An-Naml 27:7-9)

Three times is the incident recorded in the Quran to stress that Allah appeared to Moses in the bush and spoke to him from it saying, "I am Allah Lord of the worlds" (Sura Al-Qasas 28:29-30), and "I am Allah there is no god but me" (Sura Taha 20) and "Blessed is whoever is at the fire in and around it, and exalted is Allah, Lord of the worlds, and also: it's me Allah, exalted in Might, The Wise" (Sura An-Naml 27).

There is no doubt that Allah appeared to Moses in the bush physically and spoke to him from it; and the story is repeated in different suras. If Allah appeared in the material tree – the bush – and spoke to Moses from it, He can appear in a physical human body.

Therefore, it is not apostasy to believe He can appear in a physical body.

*Islamic scholars realize the need for a mediator*

Two prominent Islamic scholars have testified about the inevitable need for a mediator between man and God.

Ahmad Al-Shahristani: "The Honafa said: 'In deep spiritual matters, we need a mediator from the human race whose rank in purity and infallibility, support and wisdom are above (us) to represent us as humans and to be distinct from us in spirituality; he receives the revelation by the spiritual side and brings it to the human kind by the human side'." [63]

Dr. Mohammad Abdel Hady Abu Rida: "The mediator is Allah in the form of a man."[64]

This is what Christianity believes, as shown in this verse: "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

*Islamic schools of speech testify to the manifestation of Allah in human form*

> The people of Al-bianyah, followers of Ben Simon Tamimi: "There came upon Ali bin Abi Talib, a divinity and united with his body...The kingly power in his soul is like the lamp in the niche and the divine light as the light in the lamp."[65]
>
> The Ahle Nasiriyah and Is-Hakians: "The appearance of the spiritual in the flesh (physical) is not denied by sanity." And they gave examples of this truth: "As the appearance of Jibril – to Mohammad – in the form of a Bedouin and his representation in a human form."[66]

Perhaps they meant by these words what was said in Sura Maryam 19:16-17:

> "And mention, [O Mohammad], in the Book [the story of] Mary, when she withdrew from her family to a place toward the East. And she took, in seclusion from them, a screen. Then We sent to her Our Angel, and he represented himself to her as a real human being."

These testimonies indicate that the angel is a spirit that appeared in human form. Is it therefore difficult for God Himself to appear in human form when Sura Maryam verses 9 and 21 say, "It is easy for Him?" Thus, the people of Nasiriyah and Is-Hakiyeh have concluded, "Allah Almighty appeared in the human form of different persons."[67]

The Druze also testify that Allah manifests Himself in human form.

> "The doctrine of divine manifestation or appearing in the flesh is crucial, because the religion of monotheism is based on it...The reason behind the appearance of Allah in human images is:
>
> First: To make Himself known to people. Should Allah keep far away in His heaven, people would not know Him.
>
> Second: It is a result of His compassion and love for people.





> Allah making Himself known to people is a Divine initiative and not by the virtue of the human beings...And Allah has been manifested in history."[68]

It is clear that these various Islamic schools of speech accept that Allah manifests Himself in human form.

*Islamic scholars believe Allah was made manifest in human form*

> Sheikh Abu Al Fadl Al Kurashi (deceased 940 AH): "In their saying that Issa Al Masih [Jesus Christ] has divinity, perhaps, what is meant is that Allah was fully visible in him; and this is not a matter of dispute, as much as we believe there is no god but one God. It does not necessitate that Christ is God, but it is inevitable that God exists in Him."[69]
>
> The Imam Ahmad bin Al Ha'et, Imam of the Al-Haetiyeh, says about the divinity of Christ, "Christ was cloaked in a human body and He is the Ancient Word incarnated as the Christians say."[70]
>
> Ibn Taymiyyah expresses his understanding of the relationship between the divine and human in these words: "The person of Christ, to Christians, is completely and fully God, and completely man, the humanity and divinity. His humanity is from Mary and His divinity is the Ancient Word which is the eternal Creator."[71]
>
> Ahmad Abdel Mo'ti Hijazi says, "We know that Christians believe in one God. They do not separate the human and divine natures of Christ, but they are convinced that one nature unites between the Word and the flesh or between God and Man."[72]
>
> Abbas Mahmoud Al Akkad explained it this way: "Christ came in the beautiful picture of God."[73]

From all that has been presented above, we understand that the manifestation of God in a human body is not strange to Islamic thinking nor is it considered infidelity (disbelief), as verified by the testimony of the Quran, Islamic schools of speech and the prominent leaders and scholars of Islam.

## Jesus is the Word of God Incarnate

In the previous section, I discussed both Christian and Islamic viewpoints that Christ is God who appeared in the flesh. In this section, I focus on another truth, namely that Christ is the Word of God Incarnate, again examining this truth from Christian and Islamic viewpoints.

### Christ is the Incarnation of the Word of God

Christian theology holds that Christ is the Word of God. The Bible says, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God" (John 1:1). The Gospel continues, saying, "The Word became flesh…" (John 1:14). Thus, the Word of God was made manifest in the body of Christ and appeared through Him.

It is worth noting that in Arabic, "word" is a feminine noun – which is not so in English. To keep the grammar right, it should be followed by feminine verbs in Arabic, but the original Greek verbs used in John 1 are all masculine. "And the Word was God." It is clear that "Word" alludes to God Himself. Later, I discuss how Islam agrees with this theology and confirms it.

### Islam testifies to Christ, The Word of God Incarnate

*The testimony of the Quran*

The Quran demonstrates that Christ is the Word of God and furthermore that God was incarnated in a human body, and Islamic imams confirm these truths.

> "Christ Issa [Jesus], the Son of Mary is an apostle of God and His Word that He cast to Mariam and the Spirit from Him." (Sura An-Nisa 4:171)
>
> "Indeed, Allah gives you good tidings of Yahya [John the Baptist], believing a word from Allah." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:39)
>
> Al-Tabari comments on Sura Ali-Imran 3:39: "About the warp: The mother of Yahya (Elizabeth) met the mother of Issa (Mary) while pregnant with Issa and the wife of Zechariah said: 'I found that what is in my belly bows to what is in your belly'.' The verse is "confirming the Word of God."[74]





> "The angel said, O Mariam God brings you glad news of a Word from Him and His name is Issa Al Masih [Jesus Christ], the Son of Mary." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:45)

We notice the angel's use of the noun "Word" with a masculine pronoun by His saying: "a Word from Him and His name is Issa [Jesus]." The Quran doesn't use the feminine verb which, in Arabic, would be appropriate for the noun "word," so it is in perfect agreement with what is said in the Gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God…And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:1, 14).

This is what we find in the Quran about the Word of God.

*The testimony of Islamic scholars*

Below are a few testimonies of some prominent scholars of Islam about the truth of Christ being the Word of God and the incarnation of the Word of God in the person of Christ.

> Sheikh Muhyee ll Din Ibn Al Arabi: "The word is God manifesting itself, self-appointed and divine no other."[75]
>
> Sheikh Muhyee Il Din Ibn Al Arabi: "The Word is the Divinity."[76]
>
> Shahristani: "Christians say that the Word was united with the body of Christ and was cloaked in His human nature and by Word they mean the Person of Intellect (Knowledge) and they mean by Holy Spirit the Person of Life."[77]
>
> Al Razi: "That the Word united with the body of Christ and was cloaked in His humanity – Christians mean by Word: The Person of Knowledge and by Holy Spirit the Person of Life and they explain that the essence is not the same as the persons and that they are the description and the qualities, so they believe in the Trinity."[78]
>
> Imam Ahmad Bin Al Ha'et, leader of the Al Haetiyeh Islamic sect: "Issa Al Masih [Jesus Christ] put on human flesh (wore flesh as an armor) and He is the Eternal Word incarnated as Christians say."[79]

The testimony of Dr. Al-Shakankiri, professor of Islamic Shari'a at the University of Paris and Ein Shams University in Cairo, affirms the Christian theology which the Quran validates: "We know that the

Quran says that Jesus is the Word of God and His Spirit and this is not difficult for Christians to accept but the objections are raised by Muslims because they have to recognize the Deity of Christ. So, we wonder, who is Christ?" Then he adds, "Muslims accept that He is the Word of God and the Spirit of God." And he asks, but this "Word," and this "Spirit," are they created? Or are they not created? And he argues, "If the Spirit of God is not created there is no problem: Christ is God. But if the Word and the Spirit are created then we must ask another question. Before their creation, was God without a Word and without a Spirit? This is unfathomable."[80]

Dr. Zaki Najeeb Mahmoud writes in his exposition of Christ being the Word of God, "Words, once released from the heart, whether spoken or written, represent the human personality. Words identify a speaker with greater precision than a camera can identify the features. A camera presents a person in two dimensions, but in reality, people are three dimensional because words represent man in all his fullness."[81]

What has been presented above clarifies the following:

1. The use of the noun, "Word of God," in the masculine form shows that it is speaking of God Himself.
2. The Word of God has been made manifest in physical forms, speaking through the bush to Moses and speaking through the person of Jesus Christ.
3. The incarnation is neither blasphemy nor idolatry.

In conclusion, it is evident that the Word of God was incarnated in the person of Christ.

## Christ the Son of God Incarnate

In the previous sections, I have examined the incarnation as Christ being God who appeared in the flesh and the Word of God Incarnate. Now let's examine the third aspect of the incarnation – Christ, the incarnated Son of God – from both Christian and Islamic viewpoints.





### In Christianity, Jesus is the Incarnated Son of God

Often, the Bible refers to the Lord Jesus as the Son of God. For example:

> During Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River, a voice from heaven was heard saying, "This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17)
>
> On the day Jesus was transfigured on the mountain, "a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!' " (Matthew 17:5)
>
> "And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!' " (Mark 9:7)
>
> "And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, 'You are My Beloved Son; in You I am well pleased'." (Luke 3:22)
>
> "No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him." (John 1:18)
>
> "The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:35-36)
>
> "And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God." (1 John 4:14-15)

These verses and many others in the Bible confirm that Christ is the Son of God. But what does this saying mean? Is He a son through physical reproduction? Never! Rather, it refers to a spiritual birth that we shall discuss in detail.

### What does Islam ask about Jesus, the Incarnated Son of God?

Let's get deeper into this issue that I have already touched on briefly in the previous section. Muslims stumble upon this truth and don't accept that "God has a son." They ask the following questions:

*How can God have a son?*

The Quran objects to the idea of God having a "son" in the following verses:

> "Allah is but one God. Exalted is He above having a son." (Sura An-Nisa 4:171)
>
> "[He is] Originator of the heavens and the earth. How could He have a son when He does not have a companion and He created all things? And He is, of all things, knowing." (Sura Al-Anaam 6:101)
>
> "It is not befitting for Allah to take a son; exalted is He! When He decrees an affair, He only says to it, 'Be,' and it is." (Sura Maryam 19:35)
>
> "Allah has not taken any son, nor has there ever been with Him any deity." (Sura Al-Mumenoon 23:91)

There are many similar verses. For further research, see Sura Az-Zukhruf 43:81; Sura Al-Baqara 2:116; Sura Yunus 10:68; Sura Al-Isra 17:111; Sura Al-Kahf 18:4; Sura Maryam 19:88, 91-92; Sura Al-Anbiya 21:26; Sura Al-Furqan 25:2 and Sura Al-Jinn 72:3.

*Why do Christians call Jesus the Son of God?*

The reality is that the Christian faith does not mean by "Son of God" any sexual/physical relationship between God Almighty and any wife. The issue that the Quran is resisting is clear in Sura Al-Anaam 6:101, which asks, "How could He have a son when He has no wife and He created all things?" The truth of the matter is that neither this verse nor any of the verses I have already quoted contradicts the Christian teaching of the Son of God.

*Where did the phrase, "Christ, the Son of God," come from?*

"Son of God" is used explicitly in the Bible when Gabriel tells the Virgin Mary, "The Holy One born of you will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

### The meaning of "Son of God"

What does it mean that Christ is the Son of God? Many people from diverse cultures understand the term "son" to intrinsically mean physical reproduction. However, it has many other connotations.





*The word "son" is a statement of identity*

The phrase "son of man" refers to a person with a human nature, flesh and blood just as his father's. A "son of man" is of the nature and essence of humanity. The same applies to "Son of God." God's Word incarnated in Christ has the same nature and essence as God Himself and thus the term, "Son of God." In the Christian Creed, we say, "We believe in one God, God the Father who created heaven and earth, and all things seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of God; Light of Light, true God of true God."

Abbas Al Akkad, a contemporary Muslim scholar commented on this, saying, "The Persons of the Trinity are one essence. The Word and the Father are one presence."[82] This meaning is confirmed linguistically. In Arabic, we use the expression, "this man is an Arab, the son of an Arab," to stress the Arab origin of the person and that he is an Arab to the bone in his behavior, attitudes and nature. Applying this reasoning, when we say, "Christ is the Son of God," we are affirming that in relation to His divine nature, Christ is truly God. That's why we say in the Christian Creed that Christ is "True God of True God."

*The word "son" implies equality*

Arabic is a rich language. When we say someone is a "son of 10 years," we mean that he is 10 years old. When we say, "Christ is the Son of God," we imply that in terms of His divine nature, He is equal to God. That's why we say in the Christian Creed that Christ is "equal to the Father in Essence."

*The word "son" implies a vision*

In Arabic, we use the expression, "daughters of thoughts," to describe a thought that has been expressed, which is equivalent to the English expression "brainchild." In the same way, "Christ, the Son of God" means that Christ, from the perspective of His divine nature, is God Himself declared or made visible in the image of a man. The Bible says about Christ, "He is the image of the invisible God..." (Colossians 1:15). Also, Hebrews 1:3 tells us that "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word."

Sheikh Muhye Il Din Al Arabi argues, "The word is God manifesting itself, self-appointed and it is the divine self and not any other thing."[83]

The Druze believe that "The Messiah is the incarnation of the mind of God."[84]

*The word "son" implies inseparability*

Sura Al-Baqara 2:177 refers to "the son of the way." Imam Al-Manawy explains that the "son of the way is any traveler and he is called son of the way because of his inseparability from the road."[85]

Using this analogy, we see how Christ the Son of God, in terms of His divine nature, is inseparable from God and could not be separated from Him even though He was in human form. Thus, we say, "In truth, we believe that His divinity did not separate from His physical body not for one second not for the blinking of an eye."[86]

Abbas Al Akkad comments, "The Persons of the Trinity are one essence. For the Word and the Father are One Presence and the Father does not imply a self-separation from the Son. The Divine Self is not made up of a number of Selves, thus God does not have different Selves."[87]

From all the above, we can conclude that what Christianity believes about Christ being the Son of God is not denounced or rejected by the Quran.

**The Quran and the possibility of God having a son**

The Quran mentions the idea that God can have a son in more than one verse, and the prophet Mohammad declares that if Allah has a son he will worship him.

> "If We wanted amusement, We could have found it with Us, were We to do so." (Sura Al-Anbiya 21:17)

Ibn Katheer writes, "Akrama and AlSaddi explain that "amusement" here refers to a boy."[88] Muhyee Al-Din bin Arabi also comments on this verse saying, "If We wanted to take a boy We would have taken him from our Presence."[89] These words of Ibn Arabi agree with the Bible about the sonship of Jesus that He is from God Himself and not from some wife; and that this is what Jesus meant when He said, "I came forth from the Father and have come into the world" (John 16:28), meaning He came from the presence of the Father into the world.





The following verse requires us to consider the meaning of the conjunction "if."

> "If Allah had intended to take a son, He could have chosen from what He creates whatever He willed. Exalted is He; He is Allah, the One, the Prevailing." (Sura Az-Zumar 39:4)

Ibn Arabi notes about this verse, "Some interpreters say: Allah can make for Himself a son."[90] Some Muslims focus on the Quran's use of the word "if," believing that the hypothetical condition used indicates the action has not happened (parallel to this example: "If he had studied hard he would have succeeded," implies he did not succeed). Thus, if God had chosen to have a son, He could have created whatever He wills; but He did not.

My response to this argument is that the Quran's use of "if" indicates the possibility of fulfilling that condition, not negating it, as stated in Sura Al-Zukhruf 43:81: "Say, if the Merciful had a boy, I would be the first to worship him." Hence, the implied objections of the Quran against the possibility of God having a son, in more than one verse, are countered by Mohammad's explicit declaration that if Allah had a son, he would worship Him.

Nothing changes the solid truth that Christ is the Son of God in a spiritual sense and that He appeared in the flesh.

## Objections and Responses

Many questions are often raised about the meaning of "Son of God," but I will focus on the most common ones.

**Objection 1: Is the term "Son of God" respectful?**

Many argue that the phrase "Son of God" does not give God the respect He deserves and object to it as not befitting the Almighty God who is exalted and revered. To respond to this concern, we must understand that the Bible does not intend a literal meaning for the expression "Son of God," as in birth by physical reproduction. As to God's transcendence, let's examine some verses from the Quran that can help make the point clear.

> "The merciful on His chair sat." (Sura Taha 20:5)

The literal meaning of these words is that God sat on His Throne like a person sitting on a chair. Is this image respectful of God? Does God sit on a chair like ordinary human beings? Obviously, the Quran does not mean the words literally; rather, the metaphor refers to God's sovereignty.

> "Anything from the bounty of Allah and that [all] bounty is in the hand of Allah." (Sura Al-Hadid 57:29)

The literal meaning of these words is that God has hands like us. Is this respectful of God? The intended meaning is not the literal meaning; rather it symbolizes the authority of God.

> "And to Allah belongs the east and the West. So wherever you [might] turn, there is the Face of Allah." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:115)

Does this mean that God has a face like the face of man? The symbol, here, refers to God's omnipresence.

Similar to these examples, the term "Son of God" does not refer to the literal meaning that indicates physical conception, but rather a divine and spiritual meaning. As previously explained, the Divine nature of Christ is the same as the Divine nature of God and none of this is disrespectful of God.

**Objection 2: How can Christ be both God and the Son of God?**

In answer to this question, let us go back to the discussion of the meaning of the word "son." It indicates that the nature of Christ from the perspective of His Divinity is the same as the nature of God. So there is no contradiction when Christians say, "God appeared in the flesh," and when they say, "The Son of God, who has the same nature as God, appeared in the flesh."

**Objection 3: What is the genealogy of Christ?**

Perhaps some may object saying, "Is there no other word to express the incarnation of God in human flesh except the word 'son'?"

In response, I would like to stress that everyone born is a son. So, Christ was born of Virgin Mary, and thus it is appropriate to call Him a "Son." And the son needs to have a father, so the question is, "Who is the Father of Christ?"





Christ did not have a biological father. He was announced the Son of God before His birth. His sonship is attributed to God and He is called the Son of God.

**Objection 4: During the incarnation was heaven void of God's presence?**

When God appeared in human form, He was not confined and limited to that body because God is Spirit; so even though He was on earth in a human body, He filled the heavens and the earth. To clarify this point, let's revisit the evidence.

> "Allah is the Light of the heavens and earth. The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree." (Sura An-Noor 24:35)

So, the Quran compares Allah to the light of a lamp that is behind glass and this lamp is in a niche in the wall cavity. The question then is, does the glass obstruct the light of the lamp? Of course not! The light by its radiant beams goes forth through the glass and fills the whole place with brightness. Notice that in this simile, the glass in front of the lamp does not obstruct the light of the lamp; on the contrary, it makes the light shine more brightly.

Using this reasoning, we can say that the body that God was manifested in did not veil His Deity, and it did not limit the presence of God in the world, but rather it made the Deity clearer and more visible to the whole world. Christ showed us the light of God.

> "So when he [Moses] reached it (the fire in the tree), he was called from the right side of the valley, in the blessed place from the tree: 'O Mousa (Moses)! Verily! I am Allah, the Lord of the worlds'." (Sura Al-Qasas 28:30)

It is clear in this verse that Allah made Himself manifest in the bush and spoke to Moses from it. Were the heavens and earth void of God's presence when He was made manifest in the bush? God is without limits even while He made himself manifest in the tree. Based on this reasoning, when the Deity was made manifest in a human body, He wasn't limited by that human body, and neither was the universe void of His presence.

A third proof from the hadiths of the prophet is mentioned in *The Great Sunan Alnisa'i*: "Abi Hureira quoting the prophet said, 'Allah comes down every night to the sky of this world in the last third of the night and says, 'Who calls me I will answer his request and will forgive the one who asks of me'."[91] Does this mean that Mohammad implied by these words that the heavens and the earth are void of Allah's presence when He comes down to the sky of this world? Of course not! The truth is that God is present everywhere in the highest heaven and in the sky of this world at the same time.

Thus, when God took on the form of a human, the heavens and the earth were not void of His presence.

**Objection 5: How could God be in Christ who defecates?**

Strange as it may sound, this is a frequently asked question. Let me rephrase it: "Was God's appearance in a human body worthy of Him or was it disrespectful of His power and greatness that He lived the lowly life of humans and participated in human activities?" I will respond to this objection by examining several examples from the Quran that smoothly lead to a logical conclusion.

*Is God's creation defiled?*

God created man with a need to eat, drink and defecate while in the Garden of Eden. Is this unclean? If it were unclean, why did God create the human in this image? The Christian faith does not look down upon the human body or any part of its biological functions. God made Adam in His image, and there is nothing defiled in this image.

Sura At-Tin' 95:4 describes the image in which He created human beings: "He created the human in the best calibration." And Hadith Al Qudsi says, "He created the human in the image of the Merciful."[92]

So, where did this concept of defilement come from?

Defilement is a result of sin; however, the parts of the human body are created pure and thus the Bible says, "To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure" (Titus 1:15). Dr. Ali Abdel Fatah Al Maghrabi writes, "Things are not beautiful or ugly per





se, but they become beautiful or ugly depending on how they are being used."[93]

What defiles a person is one thing only, and that is sin, because sin separates people from the source of holiness and purity. But the Lord Jesus was free of all sin, so He was wholly pure.

*God honors man even though he defecates*

> "We said to the angels bow to Adam, so they bowed." (Sura Al-Isra 17:61 and Sura Al-Hijr 15:29)

If Adam were defiled, would God have commanded the angels to bow down to him when they were created from fire, as mentioned in the *Al Muharar Al Wajeez*?[94]

> "Behold, I make on the earth a successor." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:30)

Does God create anything that is faulty or defiled?

> "We honored sons of Adam." (Sura Al-Isra 17:70)

Does God honor people with disgraceful biological organs?

*The prophets defecated*

Abraham, the father of the prophets, had a body that ate and drank and defecated; and yet he was called "the friend of Allah." Moses the prophet had a body and ate and drank and defecated and was called "the spokesman of Allah." The prophet Mohammad had a body that ate and drank and defecated and was called "the beloved of Allah."

The Hadith Al Qudsi says, "Allah is for his servant the ears with which he hears, and the eyes with which he sees, the hand with which he strikes and the foot with which he walks."[95] In the story of Al Me'raj, when Mohammad was taken to heaven on the back of Al Buraq, Mohammad went up to the Divine Presence in his body and with all his biological organs. On one occasion, Mohammad was going to defecate when he heard someone calling him, "O Mohammad and this voice was from heaven."[96] Isn't that proof that the thing that defiles a human being is sin and that impurity is the result of the thoughts and not the body?

*All human beings defecate*

All humans defecate; even so Sura Qaf 46:16 says, "Allah is closer to them than the jugular vein." Hadith Al Qudsi says, "If a worshipper is defecating, Allah does not consider him defiled, but hurries towards him despite the human remains inside his body."[97] Sa'd bin Ma'az was a human who ate, drank and defecated and *True Sunna* affirms, "The throne of the Merciful shook upon his death."[98]

This is how God views humans. So, how can anyone claim that some biological functions defile humans or disgrace them? We deduce from these examples that those who pose these concerns have impure thoughts about human nature that stand between them and believing the Word of God, the Bible. "The Word became flesh" (John 1:14). Jesus was the manifestation of God in human form.

**Objection 6: What is the reason for the incarnation?**

Why did God become man? This is a very good question that touches on fundamental doctrines of Christian theology, the Trinity and the Incarnation. The answer to this question leads us to research Original Sin, the sin of Adam, which all humans inherited, and God's plan of salvation through Jesus' death on the cross. This topic will be discussed further in the next chapter.

***

In conclusion, let's not forget that the Quran and Islamic scholars agree that Christ is the Son of God who appeared in the flesh. It is neither apostasy nor idolatry because God is One: He is eternal and there is no one like Him.





# Chapter 3: THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST

The topic of the Crucifixion requires us to examine in sequence the creation of man, the problem of sin, the penalty of sin, the gift of forgiveness, the inevitability of redemption and the reality of the Crucifixion. We will contrast and compare the Christian view on each of these topics with that of Islam. Then in the next chapter we'll examine and respond to a number of objections Muslims raise to the reality of the crucifixion.

## The Creation of Man

Christianity believes that the Lord God created man in His own image, pure and complete.

> "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." (Genesis 1:26-27)

> "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God." (1 Corinthians 11:7)

Islam also believes that Allah created man in His own image.

> "We have indeed created man in the best of stature." (Sura At-Teen 95:4)

> "Allah created Adam in the image of the Rahman the Merciful."[99]

> Quoting Mohammad, Abi Huraira says, "If you hit anyone, avoid beating his face, and do not call anyone ugly, for Allah Almighty created Adam in His own image."[100]

Clearly, Christianity and Islam believe that God created man in His own image, in His pure and perfect qualities. There is no contradiction between the two narratives.

## The Problem of Sin

### The problem of sin in Christianity

Sin is the virus that polluted the human race and is the motivation for Christ's Crucifixion. But how did sin enter the world? And how did it pass onto all humankind?

*Original sin*

The Apostle Paul writes, "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned…" (Romans 5:12; see also Genesis 2:17 and 3:6). Adam sinned by disobeying God's command and ate from the tree, and so sin entered the world.

*The sins of Adam's descendants*

Adam's sin was passed on to his descendants.

> "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:22; see also Romans 3:10, 12, 5:12 and Galatians 5:17)

*The sins of the prophets*

As the Apostle Paul says, "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). In fact, even the prophets did not escape this sinful nature, for the whole human race is contaminated. Abraham lied to Pharaoh when he claimed that Sarah was his sister to avoid death (Genesis 12:19). Moses killed an Egyptian when he saw him beating a fellow Hebrew (Exodus 2). Noah "…drank of the wine and was drunk and became uncovered in his tent" (Genesis 9:21).

### The problem of sin in Islam

The Quran agrees with the Bible on Adam's sin and the sinful nature of the whole human race.





*The sin of Adam in the Quran*

> "And We said, 'O Adam! dwell, you and your wife, in Paradise and eat both of you freely with pleasure and delight of things therein as wherever you will but come not near this tree or you both will be of the wrongdoers.' Then Satan made them slip there from Paradise and got them out from that in which they were. And We said; 'Descend from it, all of you, with enmity between yourselves. On earth will be a dwelling place for you and an enjoyment for a time'." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:35, 36; see also Sura Taha 20:117, 123)

*The sins of Adam's descendants in the Quran*

> "We said; 'Descend from it, all of you', with enmity between yourselves." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:35- 36, see also Sura Taha 20:123)
>
> Al-Razi: "That includes Adam and Eve, and then their descendants, and even though Adam and Eve were the first of mankind, they represent all mankind."[101]
>
> Imam Al-Tirmizi: "Abi Huraira, quoting the prophet said; 'Adam rebelled, and so did his descendants, and Adam forgot and ate from the tree and so did his descendants, and Adam sinned and so do his descendants,' and he added: 'Abu Issa said that these sayings are true and valid, and were narrated of Abi Huraira who quoted the prophet'."[102]

*The sins of the prophets in the Quran*

The Quran also records some of the sins of the prophets and their requests for forgiveness. Ibrahim, Moses and Mohammad all ask for forgiveness. Why would someone seek forgiveness unless he recognizes that he has sinned?

> "Our Lord, forgive me [Ibrahim] and my parents, and (all) the believers on the Day when the reckoning will be established." (Sura Ibrahim 14:41)
>
> "And [Moses] entered the city at a time of unawareness of its people, and he found there two men fighting, – one of his party (his religion – from the children of Israel), and the other of his foes. The man of his (own) party asked him for help against his foe, so Moses struck him

with his fist and [unintentionally] killed him." (Sura Al-Qasas 28:15, 16)

"That Allah may forgive you [Mohammad] your sins of the past and the future" (Sura Al-Fath 48:2)

"And We removed from you [Mohammad] your burden [guilt], which weighed down your back" (Sura Al-Inshirah 94:1-3)

## The Penalty for Sin

### The penalty for sin in Christianity

Before considering God's position regarding the sin of Adam and the whole human race, we need to examine the character of God, especially His justice and mercy, from a Biblical point of view.

David declared, "God is a just judge" (Psalm 7:11). Given that God is a just judge, He must punish sinners for their sins. The Lord God told Adam what the penalty would be for his sin: "For in the day that you eat of [the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil] you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17). He confirmed His word through the prophet Ezekiel: "The soul who sins shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). After Adam ate from the tree, the punishment of death fell upon him and upon all his descendants.

The consequences of death include spiritual death (Romans 5:12, 1 Corinthians 15:22), physical death (Ecclesiastes 12:7, Hebrews 9:27), moral death – i.e. shame (Proverbs 14:34) and eternal death (Matthew 13:49-50 and 25:41).

### The penalty for sin in Islam

Islam is consistent with Christianity on the penalty of sin. God is a just Judge.

> "Indeed, Allah orders justice." (Sura An-Nahl 16:90)
>
> Ibn Katheer: "He is Just that has no partiality, but gives each what he deserves." [103]

The Quran specifies punishment for the sins of Adam and his descendants.





> "Thus did Adam disobey his Lord, so he went astray." (Sura Taha 20:121)
>
> "Whoever earns evil and his sin has surrounded him, they are dwellers of the Fire [i.e. Hell]; they will dwell therein forever." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:81)

In Islam as in Christianity we find that the death penalty includes spiritual death (Sura Taha 20:120-123), physical death (Sura Al-Anbiya 21:35), moral death – i.e. shame (Sura Az-Zumar 39:26) and eternal death (Sura Al-Jinn 72:23, Sura Al-Baqara 2:81).

## The Gift of Forgiveness

God is just, but He is also merciful. Hence, the question, what about mercy? And what of His forgiveness? Divine mercy is about extending forgiveness to the sinful.

### Forgiveness in Christianity

In Christianity, the Lord is merciful and gracious.

> "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin…" (Exodus 34:6-7)
>
> "But You are God, ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in kindness, and did not forsake them." (Nehemiah 9:17)
>
> "[The Lord] who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies." (Psalm 103:4)

The Lord has a plan of salvation for Adam and his descendants.

> "According to His mercy He saved us." (Titus 3:5)
>
> "Assuredly, I say to you [the thief on the cross], today you will be with Me in Paradise." (Luke 23:43)
>
> "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life." (Romans 6:23)

### Forgiveness in Islam

Islam also testifies to forgiveness. Allah is described as merciful and forgiving.

> "Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful." (Sura Az-Zumar 39:53)
>
> "Your Lord has decreed upon Himself Mercy." (Sura Al-Anaam 6:54)
>
> Imam Al-Nasafi: "Revealing the good news of the capacity of Allah's mercy and receiving His forgiveness" means that "Allah promised you Mercy, and this is a sure promise."[104]

The Quran speaks of the return of Adam and his descendants to paradise.

> "He will forgive you your sins and admit you into gardens beneath which rivers flow." (Sura As-Saf 61:12)
>
> "And you were on the edge of a pit of the fire, and He saved you from it." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:103)
>
> Imam Al-Nasafi explains this by saying, "You were about to fall into the Fire of Hell… and He saved you from it."[105]

## The Inevitability of Redemption

Since God is completely just and completely merciful, His justice required Him to execute judgment by sentencing Adam and his descendants to death, but this contradicts His mercy. If He pardoned Adam according to His mercy, He would have contradicted His own just judgment. What is the remedy that would neither repudiate justice nor deny mercy?

### The concept of redemption in Christianity

The wisdom of God has orchestrated the remedy to this problem, revealed in the Christian doctrine of redemption. To shed light on redemption from the standpoint of Christianity, I will provide examples of redemption found in the Scriptures and clarify the act of redemption and the blessings that come with it.

Here are some examples of redemption from the Old Testament:





> Redemption of Isaac: "Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by the horns. So Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son." (Genesis 22:13)
>
> Redemption of every firstborn: "And all the firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem." (Exodus 13:13)
>
> Redemptive sacrifices of atonement: "If a person sins and commits any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord, though he does not know it, yet he is guilty and shall bear his iniquity. And he shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish from the flock, with your valuation, as a trespass offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him regarding his ignorance in which he erred and did not know it, and it shall be forgiven him." (Leviticus 5:17-18)

In his New Testament letters, the Apostle Paul repeatedly attests to Jesus Christ's redemption of humanity through sacrificing Himself.

> Jesus "…gave Himself a ransom for all." (1 Timothy 2:6a)
>
> "…if One died for all, then all died." (2 Corinthians 5:14b)
>
> "By one Man's obedience many will be made righteous." (Romans 5:19b)
>
> "For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." (1 Corinthians 15:3)

*What are the qualifications of the redeemer?*

The redeemer must be infinite: Sin is evaluated according to the person against whom the offence is committed; its punishment is also measured accordingly. The value of the atonement should befit the position of the person wronged. Therefore, if we commit an offense against God, our sin is considered infinite because God is infinite, and the atonement should be infinite as well. Therefore, the redeemer who will atone for that sin must be infinite.

The redeemer must be a human being: The redeemer must be of the same nature as the redeemed. An animal is not fit to redeem man, because it is

not of the same value of man. Thus the redeemer must be a human being to redeem humans.

The redeemer must be pure and without sin: If he himself were a sinner, he cannot redeem others, but will die for his own sin. "Everyone shall die for his own iniquity" (Jeremiah 31:30a).

*Qualifications of Christ as the redeemer in Christianity*

Only God is infinite: There is only one solution to the problem of sin, which is why God had to come down from heaven to redeem man. That is why He provided a way for His infinite Spirit to dwell in the limited human body of Christ to give Him the required infinite quality necessary for a redeemer. The Bible explains it as a mystery: "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16).

Christ was a human being: The Apostle Paul writes about Christ that He "...made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bond-servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:7-8).

Christ was pure: The Apostle Peter wrote that Christ "...committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth" (1 Peter 2:22). Jesus Himself stood before the Jews and asked, "Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?" (John 8:46).

Therefore, Christ was qualified to present Himself on the cross as a sacrifice to atone for the sins of mankind and for the redemption of all people. For this reason, the Bible says all have sinned but are

> "...justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed" (Romans 3:24-25).

Only Christ is eligible to be our redeemer.





*The work of redemption in Christianity*

There is much to say about the work of redemption and the blessings that we receive as a result; however, I will limit the discourse to the following points.

*Mercy:* "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us." (Titus 3:5)

*Intercession:* "My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world." (1 John 2:1-2)

*Death as a substitute for the entire human race:* "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) "We judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died." (2 Corinthians 5:14)

*Eternal life for those who believe:* "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection." (Romans 6:4-5)

*Glorifying humans:* "[God,] made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions...And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:5-6) "Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified." (Romans 8:30)

**The concept of redemption in Islam**

The concept of redemption is also present in Islamic writings and theology. Al-Imam Al-Nasafi writes, "Redemption is saving someone from slaughter in exchange for another."[106] Following are some examples of redemption in Islam.

Redemption of the son of Abraham: "And We redeemed him with a great sacrifice." (Sura As-Saaffat 37:107)

Redemption of Abdullah Ben Abdel Muttaleb: "He slaughtered 100 camels to redeem his son."[107]

The Sacrifices of Eid-Al-Adha: "Ibn Hanbal quoted Jaber Ben Abdullah who said: I prayed with the prophet of Allah, peace be upon him, the prayer of Eid-Al-Adha, and he left and came back with a ram and slaughtered it, saying; In the name of Allah the Great, O Lord, this sacrifice is for me and on behalf of my people who do not sacrifice."[108]

The sacrifices of Eid-Al-Adha were meant for redemption and atonement, and thus it is clear that redemption is fundamental to Islam.

Islam acknowledges that humankind must be redeemed. The Quran says that if an innocent and pure man is killed, his death will be considered as death for all people: "We ordained the Children of Israel that if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder [i.e. innocent man] or spread mischief [corruption] in the land – it would be as if he killed all mankind, and if anyone gave him life, it would be as if he gave life to all mankind" (Sura Al-Maeda 5:32). This assertion is explored below as we search out the qualifications of the redeemer in Islam.

*Qualifications of the redeemer in Islam*

The redeemer must be infinite: The Quran says God is the one who can "...remove your sins and admit you to gardens beneath which rivers flow" (Sura Al-Maeda 5:12).

The redeemer must be human: The Quran says the redeemer should be a human being: "We ordained the Children of Israel that if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder or spread mischief in the land – it would be as if he killed all mankind" (Sura Al-Maeda 5:32). Clearly, the redeemer whose death will atone for all people must have a soul and be of the same nature as the people he is atoning for.

The redeemer is pure and without sin: The Quran describes the redeemer as a person who did not "...murder or spread mischief" (Sura Al-Maeda 5:32).





*Qualifications of Christ as the redeemer in Islam*

The criteria specified in the Quran apply to the person of Christ and qualify Him to be the redeemer of mankind.

Christ is infinite: The Quran clearly describes Christ as infinite in His divine nature, that He is the Word of God and of His Spirit: "The Issa Al Massih [Jesus Christ], son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah and His Word which He bestowed on Mary and a Spirit from Him" (Sura An-Nisa 4:171). Sheikh Muh'yi Al-Dean Ben Arabi confesses, "The "Word" is the manifestation of God Himself...It is the Divine God and no other."[109]

Christ is human: It was an angel who announced His humanity when he brought Mary the tidings of His birth. "[The angel] said; 'I am only a Messenger from your Lord, to give you [news of] a pure boy' " (Sura Maryam 19:19).

Christ is pure and sinless: The Quran and the hadiths support that Christ alone is pure, unlike all sinful human beings. Sura Ali-Imran 3:36 speaks of Allah protecting Him from evil: "And I have named her Maryam, and I seek refuge for her in You and for her descendant Issa, Al Massih [Jesus Christ] from Satan; the outcast" (see also Sura Maryam 19:19). *Sahih Al-Bukhari* records that "Abi Huraira; may Allah be pleased with him, quoted the prophet; peace be upon him who said: 'Satan pokes with his finger the side of every human at birth, except Issa [Jesus]; son of Mary, when he went to poke Him, he poked the curtain instead'."[110]

*The work of redemption in Islam*

I have already clarified the work of redemption in Christianity. Let's now examine how Islam testifies to the work of redemption that is accomplished by Christ, who alone qualifies as redeemer.

*Mercy:* In the hadiths, Abi Huraira is quoted as saying, "I heard the messenger of Allah (Mohammad), saying; 'that none of their godly works would help them in entering paradise.' They asked him if this also applied to him as Allah's messenger, he said; that even his godly works could not help him unless Allah granted him mercy."[111] The Quran entitles Christ "The Mercy of God" in Sura Maryam 19:21: "And We will make Him [Christ] a sign unto the people and a Mercy from us."

*Intercession:* The Quran and the imams of Islam clarify that intercession is the right of God alone: "It is Allah who created the heavens and the earth and all that is in between…You have none, besides Him, as a Wali [i.e. Intercessor]" (Sura As-Sajda 32:4). In *Tafsir Al-Jalalayn*, "Who other than Him can be an 'advocate,' a 'helper,' an 'intercessor' or 'take away your torment'?"[112]

The Quran has given Christ alone the right to intercede on behalf of people, saying, "The angels said, 'O Mary, indeed Allah gives you good tidings of a word from Him, whose name will be Al-Massih Issa [Christ Jesus], the son of Mary – distinguished [i.e. held in honor] in this world and the hereafter" (Sura Ali-Imran 3:45). Al-Nasafi comments on these words: " 'Distinguished' means highly honored; 'In this world' means in Sonship and Obedience; and 'Hereafter' means highly held in Honor and Intercession.[113] Many commentators such as Ibn Katheer, Al-Qurtubi, Al-Tabari, Al-Razi, Al-Zamach-Shari, Al-Baydawi and many others agreed that the meaning of "distinguished in the hereafter" refers to intercession.[114]

*Substitute death for mankind:* It is written in the Quran, "We ordained the Children of Israel that if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder or spread mischief in the land – it would be as if he killed all mankind" (Sura Al-Maeda 5:32). The Children of Israel killed Christ without Him having killed anyone, although He had raised the dead, was without sin and had directed people to purity and peace. In killing Christ, it is as if they had killed all people.

*Eternal life for those who believe:* Sura Al-Maeda 5:32 also has implications for the meaning of Christ's resurrection. God raised Christ after he was killed, and by doing so, it is as if He had raised with Him all mankind. There are many testimonies supporting the resurrection of Christ from the dead. I will quote a few:

> "And peace be upon Me the day I was born and the day I die and the day I am raised up alive!" (Sura Maryam 19:33)
>
> "When God said, 'O Jesus, indeed I shall cause you to die and I will raise you to Me'." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:55)





> Al-Suyuti: "Ben Jareer and Ibn Abi Hatem quoted Wahab, who said, 'God caused Issa [Jesus] son of Mary to be dead for three hours in the day until He lifted Him up to Himself'." And Ibn Assaker quoted Wahab who said, "God caused Him to be dead for three days and then raised Him and lifted Him up."[115]

Thus, the Quran testifies that Christ has risen from the dead, and His resurrection is counted a resurrection for all mankind. This is one of the many blessings of redemption.

## The Reality of the Crucifixion

The crucifixion is central to the message of redemption. Precisely because of its centrality, it is subjected to strenuous denial by Muslims. In this section, I will discuss the reality of Christ's crucifixion from a variety of angles.

### Why Muslims deny that the Jews crucified Christ

The Quran describes the Jews as "the killers of the prophets," as seen in the following quranic verses.

> "And We did certainly give Moses the Torah and followed up after him with messengers. And We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear proofs and supported Him with the Pure Spirit. But is it [not] that every time a messenger came to you, [O Children of Israel], with what your souls did not desire, you were arrogant? And a party [of messengers] you denied and another party you killed." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:87)
>
> "…They [repeatedly] disbelieved in the signs of Allah and killed the prophets without right." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:61)
>
> "…Say then why have you killed the prophets of Allah before, if you have been believers?" (Sura Al-Baqara 2:91)
>
> "…That is because they disbelieved in the verses of Allah and killed the prophets without right." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:112)

What the Quran says in these verses is consistent with what the Bible says about the Jews killing prophets and men of God.

"Nevertheless they were disobedient and rebelled against You, cast Your law behind their backs and killed Your prophets." (Nehemiah 9:26)

"Therefore the wisdom of God also said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute'." (Luke 11:49)

"Lord, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life." (Romans 11:3 quoting 1 Kings 19:10)

Clearly, there is evidence in the Quran and the Bible about the role the Jews played in killing prophets. Jesus is no exception. Why is the death of Christ problematic to Muslims when the Quran declares the Jews killers of prophets?

### The real reasons behind this denial

In the early days of Christianity, a Jewish Christian cult called the Ebionites, deriving its principles from corrupted Christian teachings, denied the crucifixion. It taught that Christ's divinity was separated from His humanity. Abu-Musa Al-Hariri says, "The Ebionites believe that Christ left Jesus; son of Mary, before His death on the cross. That Christ willingly was transformed from one image to another and caused Simeon to resemble Him and to be crucified instead of Him while He was being lifted alive to heaven to the One who sent Him. Cunning all who plotted to arrest Him; because He was invisible to all."[116] Reliable historical testimonies prove that a cousin of the prophet's first wife Khadijah, Warqa Ibn Nofal, was a priest in Mecca who followed the Ebionite Heresy. "What appeared in the life, spiritual practices and teachings of the priest Warqa indicated certainly that he belonged to the Ebionites" (*Qiss Wa Nabi – A Priest and a Prophet*).[117]

Satan's prime concern is to distort redemption and cause all to perish. We see this underlying reason for the denial of the crucifixion in the Apostle Paul's description of Satan's work: "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2 Corinthians 4:4).





### The crucifixion in Christianity

To know the full truth of Christ's death, we need to consult the Bible as the Quran itself urges us to do:

"So if you are in doubt about that which We have revealed to you, then ask those who have been reading the Scriptures before you." (Sura Yunus 10:94)

"And We sent not before you except men to whom We revealed [our message]. So ask the people of the message if you do not know." (Sura An-Nahl 16:43 and Sura Al-Anbiya 21:7)

*Tafsir Al-Jalalayn*: "So ask the people of the message the experts in the Torah and the Bible."[118]

The Bible contains many references to Christ's crucifixion. Throughout His life, Jesus spoke about the cross.

"From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day." (Matthew 16:21)

"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death." (Matthew 20:18)

"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again." (Mark 10:33-34)

"Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, 'Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again'." (Luke 18:31-33)

" 'And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.' This He said, signifying by what death he could die." (John 12:32-33)

"When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me'." (John 13:21)

Christ came for this reason – to be crucified. He could not possibly evade the cross. This would not be consistent with His character or purpose. Clearly, Christ is the Crucifix (from Latin *cruci fixus*, meaning "one fixed to a cross).

Each of the Gospel writers, eyewitnesses or narrating the testimony of eyewitnesses, testifies to the reality of the crucifixion.

"Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments..." (Matthew 27:35)

"And when they crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots for them to determine what every man should take. Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him." (Mark 15:24-25)

"And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left." (Luke 23:33)

"Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece."(John 19:23)

Even Pilate the governor, who interviewed Christ before sentencing Him to be crucified, testified; and his testimony applied only to Christ and no other.

"Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, said to them, 'You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, having examined Him in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him; no, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him; and indeed nothing deserving of death has been done by





Him. I will therefore chastise Him and release Him' (for it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast).

"And they all cried out at once, saying, 'Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas'— who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder.

"Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. But they shouted, saying, 'Crucify Him, crucify Him!'

"Then he said to them the third time, 'Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go.'

"But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested." (Luke 23:13-24)

What the Lord Jesus said on the cross proves His identity. Jesus was asking for forgiveness for those who crucified Him, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34). And He said to the thief who was crucified with Him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). Who can ask for forgiveness for his crucifiers? If Christ were an ordinary man, He would have asked for revenge. Besides, who could ever have the authority to promise the thief on the right to be with Him in Paradise?

**The crucifixion in Islam**

The Quran testifies to the crucifixion. We find reference in the Quran to the killing of Christ and a statement of His death.

"And We did certainly give Moses the Torah and followed up after him with messengers. And We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear proofs and supported him with the Pure Spirit. But is it [not] that every time a messenger came to you, [O Children of Israel], with what your souls did not desire, you were arrogant? And a party [of messengers] you denied and another party you killed." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:87)

Below is what some Islamic scholars and theologians have said about this verse.

> Al-Sakaki comments on the verse, "and some you discredited and some you killed:" "That some you totally discredited and facilitated their killing, and some you did your best to destroy. And you followed Mohammad, because you were after his killing."[119]
>
> Al-Razi says, "Because you tried to kill Mohammad, peace upon him, if it wasn't that I protected him from you and for this you bewitched him, and you poisoned his sheep, and he, peace be upon him, said at the time of his death; 'still the prowlers of Khai'Bar are after me, and it is time for me to cease'."[120]

According to scholars of Islam, the verse is referring to Moses and Issa [Jesus]; the Jews disbelieved the former and killed the latter. The reference to the killing of Christ is explicit and clear. Muslims admit that Jews kill prophets – even Muhammad himself; why then do Muslims deny the killing of Christ by Jews?

From the following verses, the Quran is clear that Christ had died before He was raised alive to heaven.

> "When Allah said, 'O Jesus, indeed I shall cause You to die, and raise You to Me and purify You from those who disbelieve'." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:55)
>
> "And peace is on me the day I was born and the day I will die and the day I am raised alive." (Sura Maryam 19:33)

The sequence is Birth–Death–Resurrection. Muslims may say that Christ will die after He comes again, but this claim questions the authenticity of the chronological order in the Quran.

This verse tells us that Christ died at the hands of the Jews and Allah was the watcher over them.

> "But when You caused Me to die, You were the Watcher over them, and You are, over all things Witness." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:117)

Islamic theologians and scholars also testify about Christ's death through crucifixion.





> Prominent imam Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti rightly states in *Al-Durr Al-Manthur*, "And Ibn Jareer and Abi Hatem quoted about Wahab saying, 'God caused Issa [Jesus]; son of Mary to die for three hours until He lifted Him to Himself.' And Iben A'ssaker quoted Wahab saying; 'God caused Him to die for three days then He raised Him and lifted Him'."[121]
>
> Imam Al-Razi: "Ibn A'bbas and Mohammad Ibn Is'Haq commented that the meaning of 'I am causing you to die' is a (physical death)."[122]
>
> Wahab: "Christ was dead for three hours."[123]
>
> Ibn Is'Haq: "He was dead for seven hours."[124]
>
> Imam Al-Baydawi: "Some said the Crucifixion was to Christ's human nature and resurrection to His Divine nature."[125]
>
> Ibn Hibatu'llah: "Ishaaq told us what Idris said quoting Wahab Bnu Man'Bah and Kaa'b who said; 'I shall cause you to die', means I am going to make you taste death, then I will lift you up, then Wahab said that, 'God caused Him to die for three days, then He raised Him and lifted Him up'."[126]

It is clear from the testimonies of Islamic scholars that Christ died.

**Archaeological evidence for the crucifixion**

In AD 1280, while searching for Roman artifacts in the city of Aquila near Napoli in Italy, archaeologists discovered a brass plate bearing the original verdict of Pontius Pilate, Governor of Judea, incriminating Jesus and sentencing Him to be crucified.[127] This is one of the many relics of the crucifixion. Below is the text of the verdict:

> "In the Seventeenth Year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius Caesar, and on the twenty-fifth day of the month of Athar [March] in the Holy City of Jerusalem, during the time of the two high priests Annas and Caiaphas and in the Age of Pontius Pilate, Jesus was sentenced to death by crucifixion, based on the many complaints that were provided by the people that Jesus of Nazareth: was deceptive and misleading, provoked people to riot and stirred up the people, was an enemy of the Law, called Himself 'Son of God,' called Himself 'King

of the Jews,' entered the temple followed by a multitude carrying palm branches in their hands.

"For this, Pontius Pilate ordered the Centurion Comenius Cornelius to bring Jesus to the place prepared for Him to be killed and to detain anyone opposing the execution of this judgment; whether rich or poor."

**Historical evidence to the crucifixion**

*The testimony of the Jewish Talmud*

The Jewish Talmud states, "Jesus was crucified one day before Passover and He was killed because He was deceitful and intended to deceive Israel."[128]

*The testimony of Josephus*

Josephus was a first-century Roman-Jewish scholar and historian who was born in Jerusalem in AD 38 and died at the beginning of the 2nd century. He testifies in his writings that "Jesus the Messiah was a wise teacher who was crucified by Pilate, and when Pontius Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men, had condemned Him to the cross, those who had first come to love Him did not forsake Him, for He appeared to them alive on the third day. A group of Christians, who were called after Him, remain to this day."[129]

*The testimony of Cornelius Tacitus*

Tacitus, the Roman historian (AD 55 – 125), was the Roman consul serving in the highest office of the Roman Republic. He recorded the incidents of the Roman Empire from the death of the Emperor Augustus Caesar in the year AD 14 to the death of Nero in the year AD 68. He writes, "The People whom Nero was torturing were called Christians in association to a person named Christ whom Pontius Pilate sentenced to death during the Age of Tiberius Caesar."[130]

*The testimony of Justin Tertullian*

Tertullian, the martyred philosopher and scholar, was one of the forefathers of the ancient church. He writes, "Pontius Pilate sentencing Christ to be crucified is kept in the records of the Roman Empire in Rome."[131]





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From all the above-mentioned evidence, the facts of Christ's crucifixion are assured, and objections to these facts are totally immaterial.

# Chapter 4: RESPONDING TO MUSLIM OBJECTIONS ABOUT THE CRUCIFIXION

Muslims objections to the crucifixion are based on a singular passage in the Quran, Sura An-Nisa 4:157-158, which says, "And for their saying [i.e. the Jews], 'Indeed, we have killed the Messiah; Issa Al Massih [Jesus Christ], the son of Mary; the Messenger of Allah'. And they did not kill him, nor did they crucify Him, but they imagined it...And they did not kill Him, for certain. But Allah raised Him up to Himself."

Based on this passage, Muslims raise a number of objections. Let us discuss these objections to get to the truth.

## Objection 1: "Christ was not crucified"

To clarify what Sura An-Nisa 4:157 really means, we need to review some other quranic verses and examine what Islamic scholars and theologians say.

> "They deceived, and Allah deceived. Allah is the best of deceivers. Oh! Issa [Jesus], I shall cause You to die, and I will raise You to Me and purify You from those who disbelieve." (Sura Ali-Imran 2:54-55)

In this verse, the Quran says Christ died before He ascended to heaven.

> "And peace be upon Me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised up alive!" (Sura Maryam 19:33)

In this verse, the Quran says Christ died before He was raised to life.

> "But when you had me die, You were the Watcher over them." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:117)

It is so clear in this verse that the Quran says Christ died at the hands of the Jews and God was the "Watcher over them." Let us now review the

statements of Islamic scholars and their interpretation of the above-mentioned verses.

> Al-Qurtubi commenting on what Ben Abbas said: " 'I am causing you to die' means 'deceased or dead'."[132]
>
> Al-Suyuti: "Ibn Jareer and Ibn Abi-Hatem quoted Wahb, saying; 'Allah, caused Issa [Jesus] son of Mary, to be dead for three hours until He lifted Him up to Himself.' And Ibn Aassaker quoted Wahab saying: 'Allah caused Him to be dead for three days, and then He raised Him and lifted Him up'."[133]
>
> Imam Al-Baydawi: "As some folks said, 'The crucifixion affected the human nature (of Christ) and the ascension to heaven was for the divine nature'."[134]

In fact, what Al-Baydawi says about the crucifixion of the human nature is absolutely correct, but he was incorrect about the ascension of divine nature. Christians believe that Christ's crucifixion affected His physical human flesh; but the process of the crucifixion did not affect His divinity, even though His humanity was not separated from His divinity, not even for the blink of an eye.

## Objection 2: "Another was made to resemble Him"

Sura An-Nisa 4:157-158 was inspired by the heretical beliefs of the Ebionite cult represented by Warqa Ben Nofel. Jawad Ali summarizes the doctrine of the Ebionites by saying about them, "Some of them denied the known crucifixion and believed that the crucifix was not Christ but he resembled Christ and so they imagined that he was really Christ."[135] The objectors thus concluded that Christ was not crucified, but they imagined it.

Islamic scholars and theologians have different opinions about what this passage means. One opinion is that although this verse seems to deny the killing of Christ and His crucifixion, it does not deny His death. That is, the issue is not in the method of death as much as it is in the fact itself. Whether Christ was crucified, killed or just died, the truth is one in its essence: Christ died for our sins as the Bible says. "For I delivered to you





first of all that which I so received; that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3).

A second opinion held by Islamic scholars and theologians is that Sura An-Nisa 4:157 is denying the rumors that the Jews killed Christ. Dr. Zuhair Jaw'Har published an article on June 5th, 2008 under the title, "Did the Quran deny the Crucifixion of Christ?" in which he writes, "the above is to respond to the Jews' allegation that they have killed Jesus."[136] The death of Christ is not a lie or a rumor that the Jews spread for the Quran to deny; on the contrary, the Quran testifies that the Jews are the murderers of prophets. Sura Ali-Imran 2:112 says, "That is because they [the Jews] blasphemed in the verses of Allah and killed the prophets without right."

Discussing this verse is critical. I will be discussing it from seven different angles.

### Conflicting viewpoints of Islamic scholars about An-Nisa 4:157

Here are some of the varying interpretations of this verse:

> God made one of the disciples named Sergius to resemble Christ.[137]
>
> God made Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus to the Jews, to resemble Jesus.[138]
>
> God made one of the Roman soldiers to resemble Christ.[139]
>
> Al-Tha'3labi thought that God made a man called Titianus to resemble Jesus, and they killed him.[140]
>
> Al-Samaani says, "God Almighty had made the one who pointed Jesus out to them to resemble Him, and so they killed him."[141]

It is well known that conflicting evidence given by witnesses is proof their statements are invalid. Moreover, these scholars cannot be trusted to provide reliable evidence because they did not eyewitness the event and are speculating.

### Was God in need of this drama?

Wasn't God able to save Jesus without all this drama? Was He not able to lift Him up to heaven without having a substitute crucified?

By claiming someone else was crucified in place of Christ, these scholars are unintentionally confirming the principle of redemption that they mean to deny. If their motive in sparing Christ and saving Him from death is to honor Him, why wasn't it done publicly? Why raise Him up to heaven secretly? In truth, Christ specifically came to our earth as the redeemer of mankind. He came to die to save us from sin. How can someone else redeem Him and be crucified in His place? God is not in need of this deceptive drama that some theologians of Islam made up.

### Are lying and deception among the attributes of God?

How could God resort to deceptive methods and lies that are so unlike His character and that are frowned upon even by the Quran?

> "A painful torment is theirs because they used to tell lies." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:10)
>
> "The curse of Allah upon those who lie." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:61)

God is not a deceiver to commit this deception and cheat people. God is the True and Faithful One who never lies.

### Rational Interpretations of some Islamic scholars

Here I present an analysis of the quranic text, "But they imagined it," given by two of Islam's greatest scholars, who are renowned for their interpretation of the Quran – Imam Al-Razi and Imam Al-Baydawi.

The great Imam Al-Razi in this interpretation dismisses the likelihood that the text means to say that another person was made to look like Christ.

> "If we say: that God Almighty can make someone resemble someone else, then this is going to open a door to nonsense. For example; if we saw Zaid then we might perhaps say that he is not Zaid, but some other man who was made to look like Zaid. This is sheer nonsense. Applying this theory in everyday life would mess up fundamentals such as marriage, divorce, and ownership. Endorsing the 'resembling theory' is ultimately going to lead to questioning and doubting any testimony, and even laws...In fact, opening this door will not only lead to questioning testimonies, but it will also lead us to questioning the authenticity of all the prophets, peace be upon them."[142]





Imam Al-Baydawi says in *Tafsir Al-Baydawi*, "Some claim that His human nature was crucified, and His Divine nature ascended to heaven." So they interpreted the quranic verse "they imagined it" to mean that it was Christ who was crucified; and His likeness did not fall on someone else to be crucified in His place.[143]

### Clarifying the text "But they imagined it"

Various interpretations have been set forth for this verse. Some suggest "They imagined it" means that in crucifying Christ, it seemed to the Jews that they had completely gotten rid of Him and His Message. But it is impossible to get rid of Christ and His Message, so "they imagined it." That is, they thought they succeeded.

Some have interpreted Sura Al-Anfal 8:17, "And you did not slay them, but it was Allah Who slew them, and you did not smite when you smote [the enemy], but it was Allah Who smote," to apply to "they imagined it". That is, the Jews imagined that they were the ones who killed Jesus when in fact, according to Islamic doctrine, it was God who allowed this to happen.

Others think "they imagined it" means that Christ who died is alive with God, according to Sura Ali-Imran 3:169: "And do not think of those who have been killed in the cause of Allah are dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision." The same doctrine is expressed in Sura Al-Baqara 2:154 which says, "And do not say about those who are killed in the way of Allah, 'They are dead.' Rather, they are alive, but you are not aware."

In other words, the ones who are killed for the sake of God are not dead. Even if this may mean crucifying humanity, it cannot mean crucifying the Divinity, which is what Imam Al-Baydawi referred to when he said, "The Crucifixion of Christ the human and the ascension of Christ the Divine." [144] As I mentioned earlier, in saying "crucifixion of His humanity," Imam Al-Baydawi was absolutely correct; but he was not right about "ascension of His divinity." Christians believe Christ's divinity was not separated from His humanity, not even for a second or for a blink of an eye.

### Contradictions between Sura An-Nisa 4:157 and other quranic verses

If Sura An-Nisa 4:157 denies Christ was crucified or killed, then it is inconsistent with all the quranic verses that declare Christ's death.

> "And the disbelievers [i.e. the Jews] planned, but Allah planned. And Allah is the best of planners. When Allah said; 'Oh, Issa [Jesus], Indeed I shall cause You to die and raise you to Me and purify You from those who disbelieve and make those who follow You in submission to Allah alone superior to those who disbelieve until the Day of Resurrection'." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:54- 55)

> "But when You had Me die, You were the Watcher over them, and You are, over all things, Witness." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:117)

> "And peace is on Me the day I was born and the day I will die and the day I am raised up alive." (Sura Maryam 19:33)

All these verses explicitly confirm the death of Christ before He was raised from the dead, which totally contradicts an interpretation of Sura An-Nisa 4:157 that denies that He was crucified or killed.

### Analytic study of Sura An-Nisa 4:157

To complete this study of the verse that claims someone else "resembling Christ" was crucified in His place, I will analyze the verse linguistically, objectively, rhetorically and logically.

*Linguistic analysis*

From a linguistic point of view, Sura An-Nisa 4:157 is more likely to mean that the Jews killed Christ and felt they had gotten rid of Him and His message forever than it is to mean that God caused another human being to resemble Christ. This is confirmed through the following references.

Imam Al-Zamakhshari challenges the meaning of the quranic phrase, "resemble to them," by asking, "referring to what?" and then, he adds,

> "Is the reference to Christ? But it does not say 'resemble Him,' but 'resemble to them' i.e. it seemed to them or they imagined it. To explain this: If the word 'resemble' refers to Christ, then here comes the question: To whom was Christ's resemblance given? And the





> Quran does not explicitly specify the meaning, but some commentators have adopted this interpretation that Christ's resemblance was cast upon someone else. If you think the expression 'resemble to them' refers to the person who was killed instead of Christ, and this is the view of some of the commentators who interpret the verse to mean that the Jews killed someone other than Christ, who resembled Him; then the slaying of the one who died instead of Christ, has not been mentioned in the Quran."[145]

Imam Al-Zamakhshari came to an important conclusion that explains the true meaning of Sura An-Nisa 4:157 and which proves the verse is not contradictory to the other references about the death of Christ. He says, "The word 'resembled to them' refers to Jews, and they were the ones who imagined it." Zamakhshari's interpretation is the most logical and truthful of all attempts at interpreting Sura An-Nisa 4:157.

Imam Al-Razi comments on the opinions of the theologians who supported the idea that the resemblance of Christ was cast upon someone else. I have already referenced him in the previous discussion and will quote extensively one more of his comments.[146]

> "When we examine Sura An-Nisa 4:157, 'And they did not kill Him, nor did they crucify Him; but they imagined it,' we encounter a problematic theory; and the stories and the interpretations vary. At one time it is said the God Almighty has caused Christ's enemy to resemble Him and to be crucified and killed. And another version of the story is that some of His companions desired to resemble Him [i.e. to look like Him] to be killed in His place. Overall, whatever the story is, and the theory that 'God caused someone to resemble Christ' has problems [He continues]:"

> Problem 1: "If it is permissible to cause someone to resemble another; it would open the door to total insecurity and chaos. For example: if I look upon my own child then at another glance assume that the child I am looking upon is not my own child, but someone else who is made to resemble him; surely, my sense of security would be lost. And if we accept that, then we can say that also Mohammad's companions, who knew the prophet and listened to him instructing them, may at any point, doubt that Mohammad is their prophet because there is a

possibility that someone else was caused to resemble him. This theory will lead to the downfall of all shari'a laws and therefore, open the door to all kinds of nonsense."

Problem 2: "God Almighty commanded Jibril, to be with Christ all the time, and this is what the commentators said in interpreting Sura Al-Maeda: 5:110: 'And I supported You with the Holy Spirit'. The tip of one of Jibril's wings, peace be on him, is enough to protect all humankind, so how was it not enough to prevent the Jews from harming Christ? Also, if Christ was able to raise people from the dead, and heal the lepers, how wasn't He able to kill the Jews who wanted to harm Him, or paralyze them and make them unable to harm Him?"

Problem 3: "If God Almighty was able to save Him from the enemies by lifting Him to heaven, what is the use of causing someone else to resemble Him? And what is the benefit of throwing an innocent man to be tortured and killed?"

Problem 4: "If someone else was made to resemble Him and He then was lifted up into heaven, then the people who falsely believed Him to be Issa [Jesus], were deceived; and this is not befitting the wisdom of God Almighty."

Problem 5: "Christians, in the East and the West, were handed the testimonials of the forefathers regarding the Crucifixion and death of Christ. Denying the Crucifixion is challenging proven evidence; and would open the door to deny the prophecy of Mohammad, the prophecy of Issa [Jesus], their existence, and the existence of all the rest of the prophets."

Problem 6: "The tales claim that the Crucifix remained on the cross enough time to defend Himself and speak up, and if it weren't Jesus on the cross but someone else, he would have cried out: 'I am not Issa [Jesus] but someone else.' And if this had happened, it would have been made a known fact. But since this is not how it happened, this means that it is not as the commentators have said."[147]

This is exactly what is written in *Al-Lubab Fi Ulum Al-Kitab*.[148]

Linguistically speaking, the interpretation given by some of the greatest imams in interpreting the Quran is that the expression, "They imagined





it," does not mean that someone else was made to resemble Christ or was crucified instead of Him. Rather, it means that it *seemed* to the Jews that they had completely wiped out Christ and His message when in fact, after His death on the cross, Christ was resurrected and ascended to heaven, and is alive forever and ever.

*Objective analysis*

An objective approach discusses the obvious – what any reader can see in the verse. Was the intention to deny the crucifixion and death, or was it to disclaim the bragging of the Jews who thought they had gotten rid of Christ and wiped Him out completely?

Sura An-Nisa 4:157 says, "And they did not kill Him certainly," but Sura Ali-Imran 3:54-55 says, "And the disbelievers [i.e. the Jews] planned, but Allah planned. And Allah is the best of planners. When Allah said; 'Oh, Jesus, Indeed I shall cause You to die and raise You to Me and purify You from those who disbelieve and make those who follow You [in submission to Allah alone] superior to those who disbelieve until the Day of Resurrection'." In comparing these two passages, we note the Jews planned to kill Christ and completely get rid of Him; but God is the best planner, so after the Jews had killed Christ, God lifted Him up to Him.

There is no contradiction between the two verses. Sura An-Nisa 4:157 does not deny the killing of Christ but denies the total eradication of Christ and His message. Sura Ali-Imran 3:54-55 confirms that God raised Him up to be eternally alive. And because Christ was lifted unto God, Sura An-Nisa 4 is confirmed in that the Jews did not achieve Christ's complete destruction, but they imagined it.

*Rhetorical analysis*

Rhetoric is often described as beautiful language designed to have a persuasive or impressive effect on its audience by using figures of speech, music and hyperbole. "And Language and Rhetoric are known to be the best expressions of temperament and eloquence."[149] The study of rhetoric in the Arabic language is simply "the use of figures of speech skillfully to express ideas with eloquence."[150] The fact that the Quran is a book of rhetoric raises it above the level of the illiterate and semi-literate. It cannot be fully comprehended if the reader is not familiar with or has limited appreciation of the principles of rhetoric and eloquence in the Arabic

language. So, let us then examine the verse in Sura An-Nisa 4 from a rhetorical aspect.

There is a rule of rhetoric that describes the use of the negative connected with one former event to highlight on the greatness of a latter event. Let me give a few examples for clarity and then apply this rule of rhetoric to Sura An-Nisa 4.

In Genesis 45:8, Joseph tells his brothers, "It was not you who sent me here, but God." In this rhetorical expression, Joseph was not trying to deny the fact that his brothers were the ones who sold him to the merchants who brought him to Egypt, but he wanted to maximize the work of God and His wise plan.

God said to the prophet Hosea, "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice" (Hosea 6:6). Does this mean that the Lord is wiping out the sacrifice, which is the basis of worship? Absolutely not. The verse emphasizes the value of mercy without canceling the importance of sacrifice.

Sura Al-Anfal 8:17 says, "And you did not kill them, but it was Allah who killed them. And you did not throw, when you threw, but it was Allah who threw that He might test the believers with a good test. Indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing." In this verse the meaning of "And you did not kill them" does not eliminate the fact that they did indeed kill. Also, "And you did not throw, when you threw, but it was Allah who threw," does not eliminate the fact that they threw. But the method in the negative form is used to show the greatness of the act of Allah.

We may apply this rule by contrasting the death of Christ with Him being raised alive. From this perspective, we see that the purpose of the verse in Sura An-Nisa 4 that said, "And they did not kill Him…But Allah raised Him up to Himself," is to magnify the resurrection of Christ without eliminating that He was killed. This is the eloquence of this rhetoric, using a negative word not to deny a thing that happened but to highlight the greatness of another.

There is another rhetorical rule that clarifies proof in a negative way. This rule is applied to the statement, "And they certainly did not kill Him, but God raised Him up to Himself." In this instance of rhetoric, the Quran is responding to the bragging of the Jews that they eliminated Christ completely, and confirming that while they [the Jews] planned on killing





Christ to eliminate Him, God was planning to raise Him up to Himself. So, this is a confirmation, not a denial, of raising Him after His death.

*Logical analysis*

There are four verses in the Quran that give an account of Christ's death. One of them, some say, denies His death, and they interpret the rest of the verses based on their interpretation of this one verse. The simple rule of logic is not to interpret all according to one single part; but rather, the interpretation of one single part should be in agreement with the whole. This is why we need to interpret the verse in Sura An-Nisa 4 in the light of all the other verses, namely Suras Maryam 19, Ali-Imran 3 and Al-Maedah 5 that confirm the death of Christ and His resurrection.

## Objection 3: "God raised Him up to Himself"

This objection depends on the second part of Sura An-Nisa 4:157, "But Allah raised Him up to Himself." Objectors say the verse implies that Christ was not crucified nor was He killed, but God raised Him up to Himself. I explained previously that in the Quran there are verses that clearly speak of Christ's death. Let us examine how Islamic scholars have interpreted the meaning of death as it appeared in quranic verses. The interpretations fall into two schools of thought when it comes to the death of Christ: symbolic and realistic.

### Symbolic interpretations

Some interpret death as sleep and not physical death, relying for their argument on these verses:

> "And it is He who takes your souls by night." (Sura Al-Anaam 6:60)
>
> "Allah takes the souls at the time of their death, and those that do not die during their sleep, then He keeps those for which He has decreed (ordained) death and releases the others for a specified term." (Sura Az-Zumar 39:42)

Based on the above, Imam Al-Baydawi explains the death of Christ as follows: "I am taking Your soul during Your sleep, for it was recounted that He [Christ] had ascended during His sleep."[151]

Others interpret death as the fulfillment of a term.

Al-Moa'Jam Al-Waseet: "Death means the fulfillment of the term" or "taking what is owed in full."[152]

Imam Al-Zamakhshari: "I shall cause you to die" meaning "fulfillment of a term."[153]

A third group interprets death as dying to selfish desires.

Al-Imam Al-Baydawi: "I shall cause you to die to selfish desires that are preventing you from entering heaven."[154]

Al-Imam She'Habu Dean Al-Ramli agrees with this interpretation.[155]

These views represent how the scholars and theologians of Islam interpret the death of Christ figuratively and not literally.

**Responding to the symbolic interpretations**

In responding to this group who interpret the death of Christ figuratively, I would like to explain an important linguistic rule that all the renowned scholars of Islam should not have missed. If a word is used figuratively, another word should accompany it to counteract it. The following verses concerning sleep demonstrate this rule.

"Allah takes the souls at the time of their death, and those that do not die during their sleep; He then withholds those on whom He has passed the decree of death and sends the others back till an appointed [specified] term." (Sura Az-Zumar 39:42)

This verse is clear: "...and those that do not die during their sleep" is an indication that the verse is referring to "sleep" and not "death."

"And it is He who takes your souls by night." (Sura Al-Anaam 6:60)

The use of the expression "by night" really means sleep and removes the notion of "death."

These two verses are the only mention of death in a figurative/symbolic sense in the Quran. There are twenty-five other references to death in the Quran, all of which mean actual physical death. I will quote only some of them.

"Allah takes the souls at the time of their death." (Sura Az-Zumar 39:42)





"Until death takes them." (Sura An-Nisa 4:15)

"The angel of death will take you." (Sura Al-Sajdah 32:11)

Many other quranic verses deal with death in this manner, which shows that the reference is to real physical death, except when accompanied with a presumptive word that has a figurative connotation. There are absolutely no verses in the Quran that refer to the death of Christ in a figurative manner. All quranic verses concerning the death of Christ announce a physical death.

In his figurative interpretation of death, Al-Baydawi says, "I shall cause you to die to selfish-desires that are preventing you from entering heaven." My response is to ask Imam Al-Baydawi, "What do you have in the testimony of Quran and scholars about Christ being 'the Pure,' 'the Anointed' and 'free from sin'?" (Sura Maryam 19 and Sura Ali-Imran 36).

**Realistic interpretations**

Some scholars interpret death realistically as physical death.

Imam Al-Razi references Ibn Abbas and Mohammad Bnu Is'Haq who say, "I shall cause you to die means [deceased]; physical death."[156]

Also Ibn Katheer quotes Ibn Abbas who says, 'I am causing you to die means physical death."[157]

However, scholars disagree on the duration Christ spent on the cross until His death before He ascended alive to heaven.

Al-Razi: "Wahab, Mohammad Bnu Is'Haq and Al-Rabie' Bnu Ouns had different views and they all disagreed with one another; the first one who is Wahab said: 'He [Christ] was dead for three hours, then He was lifted'. The second one: Mohammad Bnu Is'Haq said: 'He was dead within seven hours, then God raised Him and lifted Him up.' The third; Al-Rabie' Bnu Ouns said: 'That the Almighty caused Him to die while ascending Him to heaven'."[158]

Ibn Hibatu'llah: "Ishaaq told us what Idris said quoting Wahab Bnu Man'Bah who quoted Kaa'b saying: 'I shall cause You to die,' means I am going to make You taste death, then I will lift You up, then Wahab said that 'God caused Him to die for three days, then He raised Him and lifted Him up'."[159]

### Responding to realistic interpretations

There are a number of contradictory statements in Islam concerning the death of Christ. Some completely deny His death and interpret it as "sleep," "fulfillment of term" or "dying to selfish desires." Others accept His death but disagree on its duration, claiming it to be "three hours," "seven hours" or "three days." As I have previously discussed, contradictory testimonies of witnesses lead to the annulment of their statements. Since the allegations that deny Christ's crucifixion and death do not even agree among themselves, this is a definite proof of their invalidity.

It remains that Christ's crucifixion and death is a fact above all suspicion and stronger than the disproved evidence.

## Objection 4: "Why the crucifixion? Does repentance not suffice?"

This objection is based on Sura Al-Baqara 2:37, which says, "Then Adam received from his Lord some words, and He accepted his repentance. Indeed, it is He who is the accepting of repentance, the Merciful." Why, then, was Christ's death necessary?

The process of forgiveness of sin has multiple aspects, including repentance, atonement, redemption and sacrifice.

The first aspect is repentance. Sinners must repent of their sins; otherwise they will not be forgiven. Jesus said, "Unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). The Quran agrees, according to Sura Al-Baqara 2:37 quoted above. But is repentance alone enough for forgiveness?

Although repentance is necessary for forgiveness, it represents remorse over sins a person has committed and the determination not to commit those sins again. Yet there is restitution that must be fulfilled to receive forgiveness. For example, if someone destroys another person's car, is apologizing enough? Does apologizing compensate for the damages? Apology or repentance is not enough to absolve sin. Atonement, redemption or a sacrifice must follow to complete the work of forgiveness. Atonement or redemption is a fundamental component of forgiveness and is evident in both Christianity and Islam.





Christianity has the revelation of the Apostle John:

> "My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world." (1 John 2:1-2)

There are many verses about atonement in Islam. Here is one example:

> "Allah will not impose blame upon you for what is meaningless [i.e. unintentional] in your oaths [swearing], but He will impose blame upon you for breaking (intentionally) what you intended of oaths. So its expiation is the feeding of ten needy people…or clothing them or the freeing of a slave. But whoever cannot find [i.e. afford it] – then a fast of three days (is required), that is the expiation for oaths when you have sworn." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:89)

It is very clear in this verse that there must be atonement for sins. The sin mentioned in this verse is "breaking the oath intentionally," and the atonement required for its forgiveness is one of the following options: feeding ten poor people, clothing them, giving freedom to a slave or fasting for three days. Major sins are only atoned by Allah as clear in Sura At-Taghabun 64:9: "And whoever believes in Allah and does righteousness – He will provide atonement for his misdeeds and admit him to gardens beneath which rivers flow."

In fact, the real atonement for sins in Islam is in connection with Eid Al-Adha, also referred to as "The Festival of Sacrifice and Redemption."

> "And the sacrifices that are slaughtered on that day are for the purpose of redemption."[160]

> Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal wrote about Jaber Bnu Abdullah, saying: "I prayed with the prophet of Allah, peace be upon him, the prayer of Eid-Al-Adha, and he left and came back with a ram and slaughtered it, saying; 'In the name of Allah the Great, O Lord, this sacrifice is for me and on behalf of my people who do not sacrifice'."[161]

> Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi wrote about the prophet of Allah: "Oh, Fatima, come and witness your sacrifice, it is in its first drop of blood that there is forgiveness for each sin…It is for all the family of Mohammad and to the people in general."[162]

Al-Ghazali: "Slaughtering of a sacrifice is for the purpose of getting closer to Almighty God. So you need to complete the sacrifice and ask Allah with every part of the sacrificial animal to release every part of you from the fire. The bigger the sacrificial animal is, the greater your redemption from fire will be."[163]

Professor Mahmoud Al-Akazi: "The wisdom in the Al-Adha Sacrificial Law is to thank God for his multiple blessings and His atonement for the bad deeds."[164]

The books of the Shiites: "It is recounted with our approval to Abi Jaa'Far Bnu Babaweeh that the messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, and his family offered two sacrificial rams, one the prophet slaughtered with his own hands saying; 'Oh, Allah, this sacrifice is for me and on behalf of my family members who do not sacrifice.' And he slaughtered the second ram and said; 'Oh, Allah, this is for me and on behalf of my people who do not offer a sacrifice'."[165]

## Objection 5: "Why should an innocent man be crucified on behalf of others?"

Muslims may object to the crucifixion believing it is inconsistent with God's love. However, the Quran states repeatedly that the prophets were being killed, as is clear from the following:

"They [repeatedly] disbelieved in the signs of Allah and killed the prophets without right." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:61)

"And We did certainly give Moses the Torah and followed up after him with messengers. And We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear proofs and supported him with the Pure Spirit. But is it [not] that every time a messenger came to you, [O Children of Israel], with what your souls did not desire, you were arrogant? And a party [of messengers] you denied and another party you killed." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:87)

Prophets were killed despite being benign messengers of God. The Lord has allowed this to happen in order to show His deep love to humanity through persistently and patiently sending righteous prophets to whom





people did not listen, but instead killed. However, God will punish those murderers and reward the prophets for their sacrifices, patience and endurance.

The same applies to Christ who came with love and endured death on the cross for all people. This sacrifice is not inconsistent with God's love, but is a sacrificial love that ransomed mankind and forms the basis of redemption and forgiveness in Christianity.

## Objection 6: "Do you worship a crucified God? Who was ruling the universe at the time of the Crucifixion?"

This question reflects a poor understanding of the nature of Christ. As previously explained, Christ has two natures: human and divine. Christians believe the Lord Jesus Christ was a perfect human who shared all the human qualities of eating, drinking, enduring fatigue, pain, hunger etc., just like any other human being, with only one exception – He was free from sin.

But we also believe the divine Spirit of God dwelt in Christ's Human Body without any change to His human nature or His divine nature. The Lord Jesus Christ is a human being with the Spirit of God made manifest in Him (in His physical body). "Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16).

So, the Crucifixion and death affected Christ's body but not His divinity. The best example that comes to mind is that of pounding hot iron in fire. While the pounding shapes the iron, it does not affect the blaze. This is the same with Christ. His divine nature did not die, and God, being made manifest in Christ, was not affected by the crucifixion and death of the body. God did not die when Christ's physical body was nailed to the cross.

***

Muslim objections to the reality of the crucifixion are based on a single quranic verse, Sura An-Nisa 4:157-158, which they misinterpret, and confusion about the nature of God, which they misunderstand. The reality of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, Son of God, is proven and defensible.

# Chapter 5: THE VALIDITY OF THE BIBLE

## Introducing the Bible

The Holy Bible contains the word of God to humans. The Old and New Testaments of the Bible narrate the history of mankind in a magnificent sequence and flow. The Bible tackles many topics such as God's relationship to man, man's relationship to God and man's relationship with others; in addition, it includes all doctrines of faith, statutes of worship, and spiritual values.

### Contents of the Bible

The Bible is divided into the Old and New Testaments.

The Old Testament, given to the Jews, includes the following books:

Legislative books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

Historical books: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

Poetic books: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs

Major prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel

Minor prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

The New Testament, given to the Christians, includes:

The Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

A record of the missionary work and evangelism of Christ's disciples: Acts of the Apostles

Letters (epistles): of Paul – Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon; Letter to the

Hebrews; of James – James; of Peter – 1 Peter, 2 Peter; of John – 1 John, 2 John, 3 John; of Jude – Jude

Prophecy concerning future events: Revelation

**Inspiration of the Bible**

Christians believe the Holy Bible, with its Old and New Testaments, is inspired by God. The testimony in the following verses from the Apostles Paul and Peter confirm that belief.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Timothy 3:16)

"For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:21)

And here is testimony about the inspiration of Scripture verbalized by David.

"Now these are the last words of David. Thus says David the son of Jesse: thus says the man raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel: 'The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue'." (2 Samuel 23:1-2)

In addition to testimony in the Bible about the inspiration of its Scripture, the Quran, Mohammad and Islamic scholars also testify to the validity and authenticity of the Bible.

*The Quran testifies to the inspiration of the Bible*

The authenticity of the Torah (God's law revealed to Moses):

"And He revealed the Torah and the Gospel." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:3)

"We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light, by whom the prophets judge." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:44)

"O People of the Scripture, you are [standing] on nothing until you uphold [the law of] the Torah, the Gospel, and what has been revealed to you from your Lord." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:68)

"And We did certainly give Moses the Torah and followed up after him with messengers. And We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear





proofs and supported Him with the Pure Spirit." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:87)

"And We gave Moses the Scripture and made it a guidance for the Children of Israel." (Sura Al-Isra 17:2)

"And We certainly gave Moses the Scripture that perhaps they would be guided." (Sura Al-Mumenoon 23:49)

The authenticity of the Zaboor (Psalms):

"And to David we gave the book of Psalms." (Sura An-Nisa 4:163 and Sura Al-Isra 17:55)

"And We have already written in the book [of Psalms] after the [previous] mention that the land is inherited by My righteous servants." (Sura Al-Anbiya 21:105)

"Their messengers came to them with clear proofs and psalms and with the enlightening Scripture." (Sura Fatir 35:25)

The authenticity of the Books of the Prophets:

"Indeed, We have revealed to you, [O Mohammad], as We revealed to Noah and the prophets after him. And we revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, the Descendants, Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon, and to David We gave the book [of Psalms]." (Sura An-Nisa 4:163)

"And We sent not before you except men to whom We revealed [Our message]. So, ask the people of the message if you do not know." (Sura An-Nahl 16:43)

"And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, 'There is no deity except Me, so worship Me'." (Sura Al-Anbiya 21:25)

The authenticity of the Gospel:

"And We sent, following in their footsteps, Jesus, the son of Mary, confirming that which came before Him in the Torah; and We gave Him the Gospel, in which was guidance and light." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:46)

> "And let the People of the Gospel judge by what Allah has revealed therein. And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed – then it is those who are the defiantly disobedient." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:47)
>
> "Then We sent following their footsteps Our messengers and followed [them] with Jesus, the son of Mary, and gave Him the Gospel." (Sura Al-Hadid 57:27)

The phrase, "gave Him the Gospel," attests to the Quran's conviction that the Gospel is inspired by God.

The authenticity of the revelation of the whole Bible (Old and New Testaments):

> "And do not argue with the People of the Scripture except in a way that is best...and say, 'We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you. And our God and your God is one'." (Sura Al-Ankaboot 29:46)

In other words, the Quran urges Muslims not to argue with the Jews or Christians, but rather use gentle persuasion, and admits that Muslims believe the divine inspiration of the Holy Bible and in the One God in whom the Jews and Christians believe.

> "Those to whom We gave the Scripture know it." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:146)
>
> "O People of the Scripture, you are [standing] on nothing until you uphold [the law of] the Torah, the Gospel, and what has been revealed to you from your Lord." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:68)
>
> "So if you are in doubt, [O Mohammad], about that which We have revealed to you, then ask those who have been reading the Scripture before you." (Sura Yunus 10:94)

These few quranic verses testify that God inspired the entirety of the Holy Bible.





*Mohammad and scholars of Islam testify to the inspiration of the Bible*

The testimony of Mohammad:

> "Say then bring a scripture from Allah which is more guiding than either of them that I may follow it, if you should be truthful." (Sura Al-Qasas 28:49)

This verse is interpreted in *Wahidiy's Concise Exegesis*: "Give me [another book] from God that is more guiding than these two books."[166] Ibn Taymiyya's commentary in *Intricacies of the Comprehensive Exegesis* says, "Bring me a book from Allah that is more guiding than either for me to follow, if you should you be truthful;" but "If they can not bring a book from Allah that is more guiding than either to follow, God dispraises them for not following what was revealed in the Torah and Injeel [Bible]."[167]

The testimony of Islamic scholars:

> Ibn Hisham: "The Book was revealed in veracity (i.e. truth concerning what they had disagreed upon and the Torah and Injeel (the Torah to Moses and the Bible to Jesus) just like Holy Scripture was revealed to who came before him."[168]
>
> Al-Razi: "Mohammad Ibn Is'haq quoted the prophet saying: 'He revealed the Torah to Moses and the Bible to Jesus peace be upon them'."[169]
>
> Muqatel Ibn Suleiman: "God the Almighty said concerning the Torah: We revealed the Torah in which there was guidance and light [and illumination against darkness] for prophets to govern from the young age of Moses until Jesus the son of Mary peace be upon them between whom there existed one thousand prophets."[170]
>
> Ibn Hazm: "God the Almighty revealed the Torah by whom the prophets that submitted to Him governed like Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, and the (unmentioned) prophets (who were) among them peace be upon all of them."[171]

## Suspicions Concerning the Four Gospels

Muslims object to the four Gospels of the Holy Bible arguing there should be only one Gospel to Issa [Jesus]. They base this on the words of the Quran in Sura Al-Maeda 5:46: "And We sent, following in their footsteps, Issa [Jesus], the son of Mary, confirming that which came before Him in the Torah; and We gave Him Al-Injeel [the Gospel], in which was guidance and light." Consequently, they wonder why Christians have four Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. To address this objection, I will compare views in Christianity and Islam regarding inspiration and contrast the four Gospels with the seven ahruf of the Quran [Different Qurans].[172]

### Inspiration in Christianity and Islam

What is the meaning of inspiration in Islam and what is inspiration in Christianity? The Islamic belief is that the Quran was written before the beginning of the world on a "Preserved Tablet" and that Allah of Islam sent down Jibril, an angel, to dictate what was already written to Mohammad, who recited it.

> "It is a preserved Quran, (inscribed) in a preserved tablet." (Sura Al-Burooj 85:21-22)
>
> "Recite in the name of your Lord who created." (Sura Al-Alaq 96:1)

Inspiration in Christianity is completely different from that in Islam. Inspiration in Christianity is from the Holy Spirit who guides the apostles and prophets so that they express in their own words the meanings that God wants to communicate.

> "For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:21)

### The four gospels versus the seven ahruf

*The four gospels*

The Bible makes it clear that there is only one Gospel, the gospel of salvation. The word "gospel" means "good news," as evident in these verses:





> "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:15)
>
> "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." (Romans 1:16)

This gospel was recorded by four of Christ's apostles, each one writing to a specific group of people. Matthew wrote to the Jews declaring the salvation of Christ, Mark wrote to the Romans, Luke wrote to the Greeks and John wrote to rest of the world. The four gospels are unique and distinguishable.

This truth in Islamic discourse would be something like, "The Gospel is one and is written in four 'ahruf'." Some might find this expression strange. They would ask, "What are those four ahruf [letters/characters]?" and "What is ahruf, anyway?" To understand this expression, we must first understand this expression from the viewpoint of the Quran.

*The seven ahruf of the Quran*

There were seven varying ahruf of the Quran, meaning seven different written versions of the recitation. When confusion arose in the provinces concerning the Quran's recitation, Caliph Uthman Ibn Affan burned six unofficial ahruf of the Quran among the seven. He left only one version of the Quran, the version known today to Muslims. Uthman paid with his life for this act.

> "Strong opposition arose (against Uthman) that culminated in a revolt against him and (finally) his assassination. The reasons for this revolt are various among which is violating religion and burning the mushafs (written recitations of the Quran); except for the (one) mushaf that he ordered to be used as the official mushaf."[173]

Reality of the seven Qurans:

Al-Tabari in his famous work *Collection of Statements on Interpretation of Verses of the Qur'an* says,

> "The Quran was revealed in seven ahruf, which means it was revealed in seven manners of synonyms, syntax, transposition, diacritical marks and different expressions. In the hadith narrated by Omar Ibn Al-

> Khattab, 'Abd Allah Ibn Mas'ood and Obay Ibn Kaa'b said they had argued about the Quran because they recited certain passages and noticed variations in their recitations; so they appealed to the prophet to give his decision on which one was the correct version. The prophet made each one of them recite the same passage of the Quran, and he attested to the correctness of all their recitals despite the variations. Some of them then, doubted the prophet when he confirmed each version to have been revealed the way it was recited. The prophet told those who doubted the truthfulness of his approval that "Allah ordered me to recite the Quran using seven ahruf."[174]

Ibn Hanbal says in a hadith, "The prophet said, Jibril and Mika'eel peace be upon them visited me. Jibril said, 'Recite the Quran using one harf [using one expression/choice of words]; but Mika'eel said, Increase it! Recite it using seven ahruf all of which have healing."[175]

Meanings of the seven ahruf:

Al-Suyuti comments on this hadith[176] saying, "The meaning of the phrase (seven ahruf) has forty different meanings, among which are: Seven synonyms expressed in various words, such as 'come here,' 'approach,' 'make haste to me' and 'hasten towards me'." Wahb, Sufyan, Al-Tabari and others support this opinion. Ibn 'Abd Al-burr explains that those seven ahruf in which the Quran was revealed have meanings that are in agreement with each other though the vocabulary is different. Al-Suyuti concludes by saying, "Commoners have supposed that those seven ahruf mean seven recitations of the Quran of Uthman which is utter ignorance."

Sheikh Abu-Jaafar Mohammad Ibn Jareer Al-Tabari explains this hadith in his exegesis, saying, "The seven ahruf in which the Quran was revealed were seven dialects having the same meaning but using different words."[177] Hence, the Quran had several ahruf meaning several texts or several varying scripts. Al-Tabari then continues in the same reference,

> "What about the other six? If the case was as described, i.e. the prophet of Allah recited them and ordered his companions to recite them, and that Allah has revealed them, why have they been abrogated and lifted away? What is the significance of their abrogation? Or is it the case that the Ummah (Islamic Nation) forgot





> them, which is wasting what they were ordered to preserve, what is the story behind that?" It was said to him, "They were not abrogated i.e. not lifted up afterwards, and neither did the Ummah lose them. The Ummah is still ordered to preserve them, but the Ummah was ordered to preserve the Quran. However, the Ummah was given the choice to recite and preserve whatever of those seven languages it wished."[178]

Burning of the other six Qurans (ahruf):

Sheikh Abu-Ja'far Al-Tabari wonders about burning the six other masahif saying, "What is the story behind that?" He comments, "Those six ahruf were dropped by Uthman who forbade their recitation."[179] Al-Zarqany said, "The Ummah saw under that leadership of Uthman who wanted to unify Muslims and remove the confusion, so he limited the quranic text to just one harf. [This harf] was upheld by the Ummah while the rest of the ahruf neglected." [180] There appeared in an article in the Arabic Encyclopedia under the title, "Uthman Ibn Affan," "Strong opposition arose against him that ended up in revolting against him and killing him. Reasons for this revolt are numerous, among which is disobeying religion by burning all the mushafs except for the one that he approved of."[181] Al-Ya'qobi said, "Uthman gathered the Quran and compiled its long suras together and short suras together. He also issued a mandate that all mushafs from all lands be gathered and he destroyed them with hot water and vinegar. Some said that he burned them, sparing none."[182]

From all the above, it is clear that from the time of the prophet of Islam until the time of Uthman Ibn Affan, several mushafs were used that were same in meaning but different in expression. Yet Uthman burned six mushafs leaving only one version, which is the one used today. Surely, had they been preserved there would be less controversy over different interpretations of the only remaining version. One wonders what these other versions held.

## The Claim that the Bible is Distorted

Muslims claim that the Holy Bible is a distorted book. Four quranic verses seem to support their claim.

"Do you covet that they believe for you while a party of them used to hear the words of Allah then distort what they have understood while knowing?" (Sura Al-Baqara 2:75)

"Of the Jews, who distort the words from their places." (Sura An-Nisa 4:46)

"They distort the words from their places." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:13)

"And among the Jews, are those that are avid listeners of falsehood, distort the words from their places." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:41)

Do these verses truly mean that the Holy Bible is distorted, or do they have another meaning? Let me rephrase the question: Do these verses mean with certainty that the Holy Bible has been distorted, or do they imply another kind of "distortion"? Let's explore the meaning of each of these verses and their claim of "distortion."

**What do these verses mean?**

*Sura Al-Baqara 2:75:*

"Do you covet that they believe for you while a party of them used to hear the words of Allah then distort The Torah after they have understood it while they were knowing?"

Imam Al-Baydawi in his *Tafsir* writes, "A party among them (some of the Jews) heard God's word (meaning the Torah) then distorted it...meaning that they interpreted it the way they wish...(after they know it) i.e. after they had understood it."[183] Another comment is that this verse shows that just one party among the Jews, and not all the Jews, is the one that undertook this distortion. That not all the Jews committed this offence proves the distortion did not take place within the biblical text.

Notice that the phrase, "They used to hear the word of God then distort it," means that God's word remains undistorted, and that they were continuing to listen to it. The conjunction "then," which linguists define as denoting chronological order, means that they hear the words of God first, *then afterwards* change its meaning.

The phrase, "After they understood it," indicates that this group of Jews knows and understands the word of God and then they distort its





meaning. "While knowing" implies that this group of Jews knows the correct version of God's word and despite their knowledge, they change its interpretation.

Hence, this verse does not refer to a distortion of the text, but rather to its interpretation by a specific group as testified above by Imam Al-Baydawi and other highly respected scholars.

*Sura An-Nisa 4:46:*

"Among the Jews are those who distort words from their [proper] places and say, 'We hear and disobey' and 'Hear but be not heard' and 'Ra'ina,' twisting their tongues and defaming religion. And if they had said [instead], 'We hear and obey' and 'Wait for us [to understand],' it would have been better for them and more suitable. But Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so they believe not, except for a few."

This verse says, "Among the Jews..." and not "Among the Christians." There is not one single verse in the Quran that accuses Christians with distortion, either to the biblical text or to the interpretation of the text. Also, "*Among* the Jews" attributes distortion to some of the Jews; but the remainder adheres to the Scriptures and does not distort them.

Notice in this phrase, "distort the words from their proper places," the word "places." What does this mean? Al-Baydawi in his exegesis explains it as "meaning that they turned from what God meant...or, they interpreted the text in the way they desired and deviated from the way God revealed it to them."[184]

The Quran defines "twisting the tongue" as pronouncing words in a way that creates a double meaning. There is an example in this verse: "Ra'ana," which means "listen to us;" but by pronouncing it "Ra'ina" it means a "fool." This is the "twisting of the tongue."[185] The distortion mentioned here does not mean distorting the text of the Torah, but a kind of distortion that was used by the Jews in their conversations with Mohammad, the prophet, as evidenced by "defaming religion."

Imam Al-Razi in his exegesis writes, "That's because a book copied many times cannot possibly have a change of wording."[186] In other words, Imam Al-Razi negates the accusation of the distortion of the text of the Holy Bible. Imam Al-Bukhari confirms in his exegesis, "To distort the

words from their places means to omit words, but no one omits the words of God the Almighty. They distort the text by interpreting it the wrong way."[187]

Hence, it is clear that in Sura An-Nisa, "distortion" does not refer to the distortion of the text of the Holy Bible, but to interpreting it in a way that is incongruent with what God meant, or by twisting the tongue and pronouncing the words of God in different ways to alter the meaning.

*Sura Al-Maeda 5:13:*

> "They twist the words out of their context."

Imam Al-Khazin explains in his exegesis, "The intended meaning of 'distortion' is casting a false doubt, a corrupt interpretation to distort the true interpretation to a false/invalid meaning."[188] Hence it is obvious that the distortion has not happened to the Word of God but to its interpretation.

*Sahih Al-Bukhari* confirms the above-mentioned comment. In addition, in reading Sura Al-Maeda onwards, verse 15 says, 'Oh People of the Book, Our prophet came to you revealing to you that which you have hidden from the Book." Hence the Quran refers to "distortion" as hiding parts of the Book, not changing the words of God.

The Jalalayn, in their self-titled exegesis, comment, "Distort the Torah refers to the description of Mohammad...and they forgot a portion of what they were ordered to do as far as (what was found in the Torah of commands to follow Mohammad)."[189] Thus, we see that exegetics of the Jalalayn does not refer to changing the Holy Bible, but the accusation refers to denying the prophecy concerning Mohammad and refusing to follow him.

The fact of the matter is that the controversy regarding the distortion mentioned in this verse originated from the prophecy of Moses in the Torah of the "prophet that is to come," which in Arabic is pronounced and spelled "ati." However, Muslims claim it is a distortion of the Arabic word "ami," which means "the illiterate prophet," and refers to the coming of Mohammad. The Jews totally disagreed with this claim of distortion. Hence the sura says, "They twist the words out of their context."





This is the true subject of the dispute and has nothing to do with changing the text of the Holy Bible.

*Sura Al-Maeda 5:41:*

> "And among the Jews, are those that those that are avid listeners to falsehood, distorting the words from their places. They say, 'If you are given this, then take it, but if you were given it, then beware'."

Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali says, "There were a lot of Jews that were passionate about catching the prophet Mohammad telling a lie; they listened intently to whatever he said, even those who did not get very close to him in the hope of catching him lying." He interprets the phrase, "they distort the words from their places," as saying, "Jews were not honest with their Book because they were distorting its meanings."[190]

Imam Zamakhshari says,

> "It was narrated that a man with an honorable status committed adultery with a woman who, also, was of honorable status, and each one of them was married. Their punishment was supposed to be stoning according to the Torah. Some Jews were against stoning them due to their status. A group of them were sent to Bani Qurydhah to ask the prophet concerning this matter. They were given the following instructions: 'If Mohammad ordered you to flog them, consent; but if he ordered you to stone them, refuse.' The two adulterers were sent along with the committee that was commissioned to seek Mohammad's counsel. Mohammad ordered to have them stoned. His judgment was refused. Jibril then told Mohammad, 'Declare Ibn Soriya a judge between you and them,' who upheld the stoning. At the end and after the testimony of the Jew, Ibn Soriya, Mohammad ordered them to be stoned. They were stoned at the door of the mosque fulfilling the punishment of the Torah."[191]

This is one narrative on which Islamic theologians and philosophers unanimously agree is the direct reason behind the inspiration of this verse. Distortion refers to distorting the judgment of stoning and reducing it to flogging, but it does not refer to any change to the actual text of the Torah.

The exegesis of Al-Jalalayn clarifies,

> "This verse was given to Mohammad when two Jews committed adultery and the Jews went to Mohammad seeking his judgment. He ordered to have them stoned. When that judgment was refused, he ordered the Torah to be brought. Mohammad found in the Torah that the punishment of adultery is stoning. So the two adulterers were stoned, to the anger of the Jews."[192]

In referring to the Torah for sound judgment, Mohammad has proved that he believed in the authenticity and value of the Torah.

**The true meaning of these quranic verses**

It is evident that the term "distortion" mentioned in the Quran refers to the interpretations given by the Jews in two famous matters of dispute. First, the Jews interpreted the punishment of adultery as flogging rather than stoning. This is a distortion of meaning.

Second, the Jews denied that Mohammad's coming was prophesied and referred to in the Torah. The argument arises from the Torah mentioning "the coming prophet" (in Arabic "ati"), while the Muslims believe the Torah meant "the illiterate prophet" (in Arabic "ami"). This is a linguistic distortion.

Among the various methods of rhetoric used in the Quran, hyperbole is used to magnify an act by connecting it with many when in reality it refers to a specific person or situation. There is an example of hyperbole in Sura An-Nisa 4:54: "Would they covet the people due to what Allah has graced them with bounty?" The two great Jalalayn explain that "people" is a rhetorical generalization used specifically to refer to the person of the prophet of Islam, Mohammad. Thus the interpretation, "They envy the people for the bounty graced by Allah, specifically meaning Mohammad's prophethood and many wives."[193] Al-Razi says, "Do they envy people, meaning Mohammad, for the bounty graced by Allah and this is because 'The People of the Book' complain that Mohammad claimed he was given what he was given in humility. He had nine wives and had no concern except sex. What a royal life!"[194]

This rhetoric applies to the phrase, "they distort the words from their places," which makes it sounds like a common practice. In reality, it has been applied to two specific situations: the Jews interpreting of the





punishment of adultery as flogging and denying the interpretation that "the coming prophet (ati)" was a reference to "the illiterate prophet (ami)."

If those who object would study in depth the common quranic methods of interpretation according to the foundations and rules of language and rhetoric, they would quickly realize that these verses do not refer to the Holy Bible.

## Proof that the Holy Bible Is Not Distorted

**The Holy Bible testifies to its own authenticity**

The Bible testifies to its own authenticity in many ways, but I will refer only to direct speeches of the Lord Jesus Christ and to eternal punishment decreed for distorting the Bible.

The Lord Jesus Christ says about the word of God, the Bible,

> "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away." (Matthew 24:35)

> "For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished." (Matthew 5:18)

The Holy Bible warns of eternal punishment for distorting Scripture.

> "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Revelation 22:18-19)

Who would dare add to or remove from the Holy Bible?

**The Quran testifies to the validity of the Bible**

In responding to the allegations of the distortion of the Bible, I cannot help but ask when that presumed distortion took place. Some claim it was

before the time of Mohammad. Others claim it happened after Mohammad's time. Let us discuss both possibilities.

*First Claim: The Bible was distorted before the time of Mohammad*

I will quote the Quran in response to this claim because it testifies to the authenticity of the Holy Bible. The Quran affirms that the Bible is God's word that was "made to descend" and that it has never been changed, distorted or falsified. The Quran testifies to the veracity and truthfulness of the Holy Bible at the time of Mohammad.

> "And We revealed to you the Book, with truth, confirming the Scripture that preceded it, and is superseding it." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:48)

What does this mean? Exegetes unanimously agree that "the Book" refers to the Quran that was revealed in truth to Mohammad and "Scripture" refers to the Torah and the Injeel [Gospel].[195]

According to Al Suyuti, "Everything that was revealed by God including the Torah, Injeel and Psalms have been confirmed by the Quran."[196]

> "He has made to descend down upon you [revealed to you] the Book [Quran] in truth, 'musaddiqan' [confirming] what is between your hands [What was revealed before it]. And He made to descend [revealed] Torah and Gospel, earlier as guidance to mankind." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:3-4)

> "And it is not the case that the Quran be produced by other than Allah, on the contrary it is a 'tasdeeq' (confirmation) to what is between your hands (of previous revelations)." (Sura Yunus 10:37)

Twelve verses in the Quran confirm the validity of the Holy Bible used by the "People of the Book" (Jews and Christians) at the time of Mohammad, including Sura Al-Baqara 2:41, 89, 91, 97; Sura An-Nisa 4:47; Sura Al-Anaam 6:92; Sura Yusuf 12:111 and Sura Fatir 35:31. If the Holy Bible were distorted, the Quran would not testify to its veracity; otherwise (if the Bible was indeed falsified) then the Quran's authenticity would be put to question. I doubt that any reasonable Muslim wants to question the authenticity or authority of the Quran.

The Quran clarifies the fact that Allah ordered Mohammad the prophet of Islam, along with all Muslims, to refer to the Holy Bible. Allah refers





Mohammad to the Holy Bible to remove all doubt he might have concerning the Quran.

> "If you (O Mohammad) are in doubt concerning that which We revealed to you, then ask those who have been reading the Scripture before you." (Sura Yunus 10:94)

What does this verse mean? The Jalalayn explain, "So if you O Mohammad are in doubt concerning what We have revealed to you of stories – hypothetically speaking – then ask those who read the Scripture, the Torah before you for it is confirmed therein and they can inform you of its truth."[197] This verse testifies that the Torah was authentic until the time of Mohammad and that is why he was asked to verify his beliefs by consulting with those "who read the Scripture, the Torah." It is illogical that Allah would ask Mohammad to check out a distorted book for verification of beliefs.

Allah orders Mohammad to follow the example of the Holy Bible and the prophets.

> "Those are whom We gave the Book (Scriptures), authority and prophethood…those that Allah has guided, so 'iqtud-h' (follow their guidance)." (Sura Yunus 10:89-90)

The Council on Arabic Language clarifies in the *Intermediate Dictionary* the meaning of the imperative verb "iqtud-h:" "Do like someone else does; follow his example." An example of the use of this word can be found in the revelation of the Almighty, "follow the example of their guidance."[198] If the Bible was distorted in the time of Mohammad, how could Allah order him to follow that example?

Allah also orders Muslims to refer to the "People of Dhikr" [i.e. People of the Scripture] to learn from them.

> "And We sent not men before you except men We inspired, ask the People of 'dhikr' [Scripture], if you know not." (Sura An-Nahl 16:43)

If the Scriptures were falsified or distorted at the time of Mohammad, how could Allah instruct them to follow the example of the People of the Scripture?

Mohammad used to cite the Torah and the Bible of his time. The Quran clearly states in the following verse that the Holy Bible (Torah and Gospel) is from God, and Mohammad is instructed to follow them.

> "Say [O Mohammad], 'Then come up with a Book [Scriptures] from Allah that is more guiding than these two [Torah and Gospel] that I may follow it, if you are truthful'." (Sura Al-Qasas 28:49)

In the following verses, God tells the Jews and Christians to observe the Torah and the Gospel as their reference point.

> "How can they come to you for judgment; while they have the Torah that has the judgment of Allah?" (Sura Al-Maeda 5:43)

> "And let the People of the Gospel judge by what God has revealed in it." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:47)

> "Say [O Mohammad], 'O People of the Scripture, you are (standing) on nothing until you uphold the Torah and the Gospel and what was revealed to you from your Lord'." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:68)

Clearly, Mohammad trusted the Holy Bible, believed the Scripture is the word of God and voiced his belief.

The Quran further testifies that the People of the Book preserved it and were witnesses to it until the time of Mohammad.

> "Indeed we have sent down the Torah, in which there were guidance and light, by which prophets [of the Israelites] that submitted to God, as well as rabbis and the 'ahbar' [scholars/priests/jurists] judge [the Jews]. It is a Book God entrusted them with and they were witnesses thereof." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:44)

Who are "the prophets that submitted?" Theologians and interpreters of the Quran explain that they are "the prophets who submitted their lives to the God's will."[199] The most important part of the verse concerns the prophets and rabbis. The verse states that God entrusted all of them with His Book and to be witnesses to its truthfulness.[200]

> "Those to whom We have given the Scripture follow it, as it ought to be followed – these believe in it. But as for those who reject it – these are the losers." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:121)





In the interpretation of this verse, Imam Al-Fayruz Abadi says, "We have given them the Scripture, meaning the Bible, with which they are entrusted, to read. They describe it as authentic and not distorted."[201]

From all the above discussion, it is clear that the Bible, until the time of Mohammad, was not distorted and this is proven through the Quran and the interpretations of scholars.

*Second Claim: The Bible was distorted after the time of Mohammad*

There is another group that casts skepticism on the Bible, but since it has been proven that distortion before Mohammad is a false claim, they claim the distortion took place after the time of Mohammad. To respond to this claim, I will quote verses from the Quran that prove the allegations are untrue and totally unfounded.

The Quran declares God is the guarantor for the preservation of the Bible from distortion and testifies that Bible Scripture is from God.

> "And We sent not before you [O Mohammad] except men to whom we revealed, then ask the followers of the 'Dhikr' [Scripture] if you do not know." (Sura Al-Anbiya 21:7)

Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali explains "Dhikr": "Dhikr is the message which is from Allah."[202] This verse is repeated word for word in Sura An-Nahl 16:43, further confirmation that the Holy Bible is Dhikr from God.

The Quran itself testifies that God himself preserves the Dhikr against distortion.

> "Verily We have revealed the 'Dhikr' and verily to it We are preservers." (Sura Al-Hijr 15: 9)

Indeed, those who challenge the validity of the Holy Bible that is revealed by God as Dhikr (Scripture) and light and guidance are in fact challenging the validity of the Quran itself, which declares that God Himself preserves His Dhikr (inspired words). Those who challenge the validity of the Bible not only ascribe inaccuracy to the Quran but also falsehood and distortion!

**The Quran is responsible to preserve the Holy Bible against distortion**

> "And We revealed to you the Book, with truth, confirming the Scripture that preceded it, and guard it (muhyminan)." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:48)

What does "muhyminan" refer to? According to exegetes, "muhyminan" means "guardians to its authenticity against distortion."[203] Accusers who claim that the Holy Bible was falsified and distorted are, in fact, challenging the Quran itself, saying it was unable to apply (the act of) "hymayah" (guardianship) to the Holy Bible. The Quran testifies that the Holy Bible is God's word; hence it cannot be distorted.

> "Do not argue with the people of the Scripture except with the best of ways and say we believe in what was revealed to us and what was revealed to you and say our God and your God is one." (Sura Al-Ankaboot 29:46)

> "Oh you who believe, believe in God and His messenger, and the Scripture which has been sent down on His messenger, and the Scripture which has been sent down before. And whoever disbelieves in God and His angels and His messengers and His Scriptures and His messengers and the Last Day, he has gone far astray." (Sura An-Nisa 4:136)

Also review Sura Al-Baqara 2:87, 146; Sura An-Nisa 4:163; Sura Al-Maeda 5:46-48; Sura Al-Anaam 6:92, 156; Sura Yunus 10; Sura An-Nahl 16:43; Sura Al-Isra 17:2, 55; Sura Al-Anbiya 21:25; Sura Al-Mumenoon 23:49; Sura Al-Ankaboot 29:46; Sura Fatir 35:25 and Sura Al-Hadid 57:27.

All these verses testify that the Holy Bible is from God. Since the Holy Bible is made to descend from God, then it is His word. Claiming that God's word has been distorted challenges the Quran itself.

*The Quran testifies that God's revealed word cannot be altered*

> "No change is there to the words of Allah." (Sura Yunus 10:64)

> "Verily prophets before you [O Mohammad] were [discredited and denied] as liars, but they were patient bearing the denial and harm,





> until our Victory came to them. And no one can change/alter the words of Allah." (Sura AlAnaam 6:34)

The latter verse explicitly testifies that the Holy Bible was not changed or distorted; it also implies that challenging the Bible is an attack on the Quran itself.

**Islamic scholars attest that the Holy Bible is not distorted**

Scholars of Islam have elaborated on the validity of the Bible. I will provide a few examples.

> Imam Mohammad Ibn Isma'eel Al-Bukhari: Concerning Sura An-Nisa 4:46, " 'distort the words from their usage,' means omitting words, but no one can omit anything from God's word. 'Distort' means they apply the wrong Ta'weel [implications] instead of the correct Ta'weel to God's words. This means that they interpret God's word falsely."[204]

> Imam Ibn Katheer: "Al-Bukhari narrated according to Ibn Abbas that they [People of the Book] distort the Holy Bible and add to it. No one can remove one word from God's Book, however, they distort it by interpreting it in a way that is contrary to the truth...Wahb Ibn Monabbih says: 'the Torah and the Gospel are (the same) as God made them to descend without one letter having been changed'."[205]

> Al-Khaleel Ibn Ahmad Al-Faraheedy: "Distortion according to the Quran is changing the meanings of words just like the Jews used to change the meanings of the Torah by using synonyms that have other implications, so that Allah described their actions saying, 'They distort the words from [their] places'."[206]

> Imam Al-Razi Al-Jussass: " 'They distort the words from their places', and distortion comes about through two methods: by changing the meaning and by replacing synonyms. Nevertheless, whatever has widely spread among people cannot be possibly changed unless there is a conspiracy or collusion."[207]

> Uthman Ibn Jenney: " 'They change the words from their (right) places,' means that they change the meaning of the Torah using metaphorical language."[208]

Ibn Hazm Al-Dhahiry: "...and it is not permissible to distort the words of any human being, so how much more for the words of the Almighty God."[209]

Ibn Hazm Al-Andalusy comments on "They change the words from their (rightful) places," saying, "this is great kufr [blasphemy] for any Muslim, who believes that the prophet of Islam adjudged to stone the two Jewish adulterers, to say that the prophet used a book that was distorted."[210]

Abu-Hufs 'Omar Ibn Ali: "It was narrated by Ibn Al-'Abbas that they changed the explicit words of the Torah and the Bible. The scholars said: It is not probable that the Torah or the Bible be distorted because they are established texts that have been in existence and are widely spread, for a very long time."[211]

Imam Al-Tameemiyy Al-Razi: "What is meant by 'distortion' is casting false doubt and corrupt interpretations and diverging words away from their true meaning by manipulating the language and using syntactic tricks. They are like contemporary heretics who do the same to verses that contradict their doctrine. This definition of distortion is the more accurate one."[212]

Idrees Al-Razi: "Abd Al-Samad Ibn Mu'qil narrated to me that he heard Wahb say: 'The Torah and the Bible are Holy Books that God gave and there is no change in them. However, the People of the Book are dishonest in their claims and interpretations; also they make up their own books which they claim have come from Allah but that is not so. As for the Holy Books of God, they are preserved without distortion'."[213]

Abbas Mahmoud Al-Akkad: "These historical manuscripts found in a cave in Al-Qumran Valley in the Eastern Jordan are manuscripts that are 2000 years old; and they contain a complete version of the Book of Isaiah... among other Holy Books. The manuscripts are identical to the version of the books we have today without any discrepancies or alterations."[214]

Ahmad Ameen: "Scholars of rhetoric, hadith and fiqh [Islamic law] believe that alterations take place in interpretations not in the





revelation...They depend in this argument on the fact that the Torah spread far and wide [before the days of Mohammad and the Quran], and no one knows the number of circulated copies. It is impossible that one collusion was agreed upon to change (the Torah) in all those copies such that there wouldn't be even one copy in the entire world that is not changed, and it would also be impossible to believe that all the alleged distortions were identical. This is something that sounds impossible and reason testifies to its fallacy."[215]

**Logic proves that the Holy Bible is not distorted**

Having discovering quranic verses and scholarly attestations to the fact that the Holy Bible was neither distorted before nor after the time of Mohammad, one would like to explore the logic behind the claim of distortion in the Bible. So, let us discuss the following questions: Where did the distortion take place? Who undertook this task? In which language did that distortion take place? Where did that distortion take place?

Since the time of the apostles, Christianity spread to Asia, Africa and Europe, and so did the Bible. Therefore, a key question would be: In which of these continents did that distortion take place, and specifically in which country of Asia, Africa or Europe? Can it be possible that a distortion of the Bible occurred in all these places simultaneously? This is so illogical that it proves the impossibility of the allegation.

Who undertook this task? Did the Jews distort the Torah and the Books of the Prophets? Did the Christians distort the Old Testament and the New Testament as well? Or is it the case that the Jews agreed with Christians to change both the Old and New Testaments together?

Let us discuss each of these assumptions. If the Jews undertook the task of distorting the Torah, Christians would have exposed this evil since Christians have copies of the Old Testament. Christians would not have allowed the Jews to distort one letter of the Holy Bible they have been entrusted to keep, as was acknowledged in Sura Al-Maeda 5:44. The same argument that I used in response to the previous assumption still holds, only this time it is the Jews who would not have allowed the Christians to distort the word of God, with which they were entrusted, as we are told in Sura Al-Maeda 5:44.

Could the Jews have agreed with the Christians to distort both the Old and New Testaments? If there were an agreement between Christians and Jews to distort the Holy Bible, it would have been inevitable for them to agree upon the issue of Christ, which is the core of both the Old and New Testaments. Since there is no agreement concerning Christ, there has been no agreement to distort the Holy Bible.

Could the Christian denominations have undertaken the task of distorting the Bible? During the fourth century, that is three centuries before Islam, Christianity was divided into denominations just as there are denominations in Islam like Sunnis, Maliki, Shafi'y, Hanbaly, Hanafy and Shiites with their subgroups. Christianity has been divided into Nestorians, Chaldeans, Assyrians (Persia), Copts (Egypt, Eastern Libya and the three Nubian Kingdoms from the south of Egypt to the current nation of North Sudan), Syrians, Ethiopians, Indians, Armenians, Caledonians, Antiochians, Greeks (i.e. Byzantines), and Romans (i.e. Latins) in Rome. Which of these denominations distorted the Bible?

Truth of the matter, the Bible is the same among all Christians. Could those denominations have agreed together to distort the Bible in the same way without agreeing to mend the differences between them? I have previously mentioned Ahmad Ameen's comment that "One group of the imams of hadith and fiqh (Islamic law) and rhetoric believe that changes are made to the interpretation and not to the revelation itself."[216]

In which language did the distortion take place? The Holy Bible was originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, and was translated into many other languages beginning in the early days of Christianity, including Latin, Coptic, Arabic, Assyrian, Ethiopian and Armenian, among others. In all these languages, the Holy Bible is exactly the same. Doesn't this testify that the Holy Bible did not suffer any distortions?

**Archaeology and history provide evidence that the Bible is not distorted**

Archaeologists have discovered ancient handwritten scrolls of the Holy Bible that are identical to the version we use today. Among those scrolls are:





*Codex Sinaiticus Manuscript:* The Sinaiticus manuscript, discovered in the monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai, dates to 200 years pre-Islam and is now in the British Museum.

*Codex Alexandrinus Manuscript:* The Alexandria manuscript, now in the British Museum, dates to 200 years pre-Islam.

*Codex Vaticanus Manuscript:* The Vatican manuscript, now in the Vatican, dates to 250 years pre-Islam.

*Dead Sea Scrolls:* The Dead Sea Scrolls are a collection of 972 texts from the Hebrew Bible found in the 1940s at Khirbet Qumran on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea, from which it derives its name. Famous Muslim author Abbas Mahmoud Al-Akkad wrote about these scrolls, "The ancient scrolls were discovered in one of the caves of Wadi Al-Qumran in eastern Jordan...the scrolls go back 2000 years, six centuries before Islam, and contain a full copy of the book of Isaiah...and several other holy books...There is no difference between them and the contemporary versions of these books."[217]

Clearly, the Bible is not distorted, the evidence is irrefutable, and the proof is indisputable.

# Chapter 6: THE FALSE GOSPEL OF BARNABAS

Muslims have been told that the *Gospel of Barnabas* is the uncorrupted gospel, and they have much reverence for it. It is important to discuss its teaching because this false gospel leads Muslims to object to salvation through Jesus Christ.

## What is the Gospel of Barnabas?

One of the biggest obstacles that stand between a Muslim and faith in Christ is his respect for the so-called *Gospel of Barnabas*. Islamic scholars have studied Khalil Sa'adah's translation[218] of this marvelously fake book. Following is a synopsis of its history and its connection with Islam.[219]

### The history of this false gospel

The original version appeared in AD 1709 in Italian, with Kramer, the spokesman for the King of Prussia. The king donated the book to Prince Eugene of Savoy, who deposited it at the Library of Vienna in 1838 where it remains to this day. It's important to note that the four canonical gospels written by Christ's disciples were written in Greek, not Italian.

Dr. George Sale, a British scholar who translated the Quran into English in 1734, stated there was a copy of the *Gospel of Barnabas* in contemporary Spanish translated by Mustafa Arandi from Old Castilian.[220]

The *Gospel of Barnabas* was translated into Arabic in 1908 by Khalil Sa'adah and published in Egypt by Sayed Mohammad Rashid Rida.

### Attempted fraud and false claims in all religions

Muslims are curious about the discovery of the *Gospel of Barnabas* and wonder why it is attacked as fraudulent. In fact, all religions suffer some degree of resistance, criticism or skeptical attack. In the history of Islam, heretics have challenged Islam, questioning the authenticity of the Quran

and hadiths and even the prophecy of Mohammad. They have always been around, as early as the Age of the Companions down to modern times, including the ages of the Umayyad State and the Abbasid State.

In the time of Mohammad there were those who doubted Mohammad and the Quran. Sheikh Mitiry writes in *Appeals of the Holy Quran and Response to Appellants of the Quran in the 14th Century*, "There was criticism of the Quran in the era of the Companions."[221] Dr Sheikh Abbas Abdel Nour writes in his book, *My Plight with the Quran*, "Of those Heretics were, Ibn Al-Rawindy and Abu Bakr al-Razi."[222] In an alleged hadith rejected by Muslims, Ibn Al-Jooziy names many of their elders:

> "Wahb Ibn Wahb Al-Qadi Abu Albekhtri and Mohammad Ibn Kalbi and Mohammad Ibn Saeed Al-Shami and Abu Dawood Al-Nakha'i, Ishaaq Ibn Njih Almalti and Ghiath Ibn Ibrahim and Al Maghireh Ibn Saeed Kufi, Ahmad Ibn Abdullah Al-al Gobiari and Ma'amoun Ibn Ahmad and Mohammad 'Okasha Al Karmani and Mohammad Ibn Qasim al Taikani, Mohammad Ibn Ziyad-Yashkuri. Al-Nasaie said the well-known liars are four: Ibn Abi Yahya in Walwakdi in Al-Medina [Yathrib], Al-Waqidy in Baghdad, Muqatel Ben Solomon of Khorasan and Mohammad Saeed of Al-Sham. It was told that AlJuybari and son of Akasha and Mohammad Ibn Tamim Al Varkani wrote more than 10,000 hadiths."[223]

There were false prophets who claimed prophethood in the time of Mohammad, such as Ibn Taymiyya reports: "Alleged prophethood of liars such as Musailama the Liar and Al 'Anassi, and others."[224]

It is no wonder that some liar writes a gospel. This is the work of a deceitful forger and it is by no means flawless. The errors are easy to discern, yet Muslims embrace this gospel.

### Reasons some Muslims believe in this false gospel

Some Muslims hold on to the *Gospel of Barnabas* because it treats Jesus as a human being and not as God. It rejects the concept of the Holy Trinity and denies the Crucifixion and the validity of the Bible.

- It claims that Jesus wasn't God and that He was just a prophet (pp. 15, 26, 34, 68, 70).





- It claims that Jesus was not crucified, that God put His image on Judas Iscariot who was crucified in His place while Jesus was raised to God in heaven (pp. 320, 322).
- It claims that Jesus predicted the coming of Mohammad who would be the Messiah (pp. 77, 161, 85, 110, 270).
- It claims that Christ stated the Bible would be corrupted after Him (pp. 72, 189).

These are some of the reasons why Muslims believe in this false gospel as though it were the true Gospel.

### The alleged author of this false gospel

Who authored this false gospel? Although he used a pseudonym, we can learn much about him from his writing.

The text clearly indicates that the author of the *Gospel of Barnabas* has never lived in Palestine where Jesus lived and is not familiar with the true nature and way of life in Palestine. The author is totally ignorant of the language, history and geography of the area. It appears from his writing that he lived in Spain, because he describes the scenery in Spain rather than Palestine.

This false gospel claims that the author was Jewish, not Christian. This claim is evidenced in the statement, "God loves Israel as a lover" (p. 103). The relatives of the Canaanite woman whose daughter Jesus healed all become observers of the Law of Moses (p. 30). The Centurion whose servant Jesus healed worshipped the God of Israel (p. 38).

### History of the writing of this alleged gospel

Accounting for the period in which this gospel was authored is not difficult and doesn't take much effort at all. Khalil Sa'adah, who translated the *Gospel of Barnabas* into Arabic in 1908, wrote in the introduction, "The consensus among scholars is that the *Gospel of Barnabas* was written in the Middle Ages."[225] In fact, this alleged gospel was not even in existence until the 14th century AD. Below is the evidence for this date.

All Muslim historians until the end of the 14th century recorded that the gospels were written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.[226] [227] [228] [229] This is further supported in the hadiths, which refer to the four gospels: "The

gospels are the first four books of the New Testament and each one of them is written separately from the others, yet all of them tell the story of the life of the Lord Jesus as seen by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John."[230] And we notice that there is no mention of the *Gospel of Barnabas.*

If the *Gospel of Barnabas* had been written before the 14th century when the great Islamic scholars Imam Tabari and Imam Ibn Katheer were in bitter disagreement over the identity of the person who was crucified and their speculations had gone overboard, they would have surely found the answer in the *Gospel of Barnabas* that names Judas Iscariot as the crucifix. Instead they went in circles trying to identify the crucifix and ended up with several unconfirmed theories, alternatively that God had put Jesus' semblance on one of the disciples named Sergius, or He had put Jesus' semblance on Judas Iscariot, or on one of the Roman soldiers. Imam Al Baydawi mentions that a Jew named Taytawos entered a house where Jesus was but did not find Him, so God put on him the semblance of Jesus. So, when the others saw him they thought that he was Jesus and crucified him. It is evident that the *Gospel of Barnabas* was not available to the imams at that time.

**The Gospel of Barnabas' view on Islam**

The writer of the *Gospel of Barnabas* often quotes information mentioned in the Quran and believed by Muslims to be true, yet contains many serious contradictions.

> He uses the expression, "There is no God but Allah; and Mohammad is his prophet." (pp. 61, 62)
>
> A quotation on page 54 is taken directly from Sura Al-Hijr 15:29 and 31 where the devil refuses to bow before Adam: "Except Satan [Iblees], he refused to be with those who prostrated. [Allah] said, O Iblees, what is [the matter] with you that you are not with those who prostrate? He said, 'Never would I prostrate to a human whom You created out of clay from an altered black mud'."
>
> He writes that the Messiah spoke when he was a baby, which is taken from Sura Ali-Imran 3:46: "And he spoke to people in the manger," and also Sura Maryam 19:24-25: "But he called her from below her, 'Do not grieve; your Lord has provided beneath you a stream. And





> shake toward you the trunk of the palm tree; it will drop upon you ripe, fresh dates'." (p. 8)

However, other teachings in the Gospel of Barnabas contradict Islam. For instance, it mentions that there are nine heavens and the tenth is paradise (p. 100). This contradicts the Quran, which states there are seven heavens: "...the seven heavens praise him and the earth and who is in them" (Sura Al-Isra 17:44). In Christianity, we know there are three heavens: the sky, outer space and paradise as the Apostle Paul describes:

> "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—how he was caught up into Paradise." (2 Corinthians 12:2-4)

In this example, the *Gospel of Barnabas* contradicts both Christianity and Islam.

In the *Gospel of Barnabas*, Jesus tells the Jewish priests that He wasn't the Messiah, the Christ, but that Mohammad who would come after Him is the Messiah, the Christ (pp. 85, 110, 270). This contradicts the Quran, which does not say that Mohammad is the Messiah but rather that Issa [Jesus] is the Messiah, the Christ. This is repeated in many quranic verses, but I will only quote one:

> "The angel said, O Maryam God announces to you a Word from Him and His Name is Christ Jesus, the son of Mary who is righteous in this world and in the end of those who are nearest" (Sura Ali-Imran 3:45).

Many other topics in the so-called *Gospel of Barnabas* contradict what is taught in Islam. This is why Muslims and Al Azhar University are reluctant to have this false gospel published.

## The Invalidity of this Counterfeit Gospel

### Ancient manuscripts and archaeology

One of the strongest arguments against the validity of the *Gospel of Barnabas* is that it is never mentioned in any of the ancient Bible manuscripts that existed before Islam, as we discussed previously. Archaeology does not lie and has testified to the authenticity of the Bible, but there is no mention of the *Gospel of Barnabas.*

### Errors and irregularities

There are many errors that prove beyond a shadow of doubt the invalidity of the *Gospel of Barnabas.* A brief synopsis follows.

*Historical errors*

The author of this alleged gospel mentions that Pilate was Prefect over Judea in the time of Christ's birth (p. 30). This is a historical error because Pilate was Prefect during the time of Christ's crucifixion. His reign was from AD 26 to 36 as recorded in *The Concise Arabic Encyclopedia*: "Pilate was the one who crucified Christ."[231] The same *Encyclopedia* also states, "Herod the Great ruled from 37 BC to AD 4 and in the days of the Birth of Christ,"[232] confirming information in the biblical book of Matthew, Chapter 2.

Also in the *Gospel of Barnabas* is the historically inaccurate statement that at the time of Christ's birth, Ananias and Caiaphas were the high priests of the Jews (p. 30). They were the high priests during the crucifixion of Christ, as mentioned in Luke 23, and not during His birth. *The Concise Arabic Encyclopedia* says, "Caiaphas was the greater leader, and the leader of the Sanhedrin that sentenced Jesus to death."[233]

*Geographical errors*

Further proving the invalidity of the *Gospel of Barnabas* are geographical errors. It claims that Nazareth and Jerusalem are port cities (pp. 19, 20, 157, 166). These are embarrassing geographical errors, for Nazareth is a city on the northern plain of Palestine, whereas Jerusalem is situated on a mountain in the center of Palestine. Neither is on the coast.





The writer of the *Gospel of Barnabas* claims that the fields and valleys of Palestine are beautiful in summer (p. 261). Nothing could be further from the truth. Palestine depends on rain for irrigation and is a dry desert in summer, so how could the fields be beautiful then? These errors reveal the writer never lived in Palestine but in some other country where the fields depend on river water and summer fields are beautiful.

*Social errors*

The writer of the *Gospel of Barnabas* describes duels fought by lovers (p. 105). However, such duels were known as "equestrian duels" and common only in Western Europe before the French Revolution, right before the 1800s. He also claims that Judas Iscariot asked to be dressed in white when he was crucified (p. 218). White clothes were a sign of mourning in Andalusia, Spain until the 15th century.[234] These errors point to the identity of the author of this false gospel as someone who lived in Spain, not in Palestine and that he did not live during the time of Christ but in the 15th century. [235]

*Blasphemies*

The *Gospel of Barnabas* says, "God says to the devils, repent and confess that I am your creator and they answered saying: We repent for our bowing to you because you are unjust. But the devil is just and innocent" (p. 54). Devils could never address God with such insolence; this dialogue is a figment of the author's imagination. The author narrates further, "The devil shall irritate God to the point that he knows that He erred in kicking him out of heaven" (p. 83). This blasphemy is demonic – the devil dare not speak to God with such audacity.

The Bible says, "Even the demons believe—and tremble!" (James 2:19). And the devils were trembling, terrified in the presence of the Lord Jesus, as recorded in Mark 5:7. These words are echoed by Islamic scholars like Imam Muslim who says, "When the devil sees Issa [Jesus], the son of Mary, he melts like salt in water."[236]

*Imaginary tales*

This fraudulent *Gospel of Barnabas* is filled with imaginary tales, tales that make it all the more fake and hard to believe. For example, it relates a tale

about King Solomon in which the King allegedly prepared a banquet for all the creation, but a fish suddenly appeared and devoured it all (p. 75).

It also tells the story of how God created a mass of earth to form Adam and left it for 25,000 years, so Satan spat on it. Gabriel purified the mass of earth and removed this spit with some of the earth under it, and this explains why people have a belly button. Then,

> "One day Satan approached unto the gates of paradise, and, seeing the horses eating grass, he announced to them that if that mass of earth should receive a soul there would be for them grievous labor; and that therefore it would be to their advantage to trample that piece of earth in such wise that it should be no more good for anything. The horses aroused themselves and impetuously set themselves to run over that piece of earth, which lay among lilies and roses. Whereupon God gave spirit to that unclean portion of earth upon which lay the spittle of Satan, which Gabriel had taken up from the mass; and raised up the dog, who, barking, filled the horses with fear, and they fled." (p. 54, 55, 188)

This imaginary tale does not reflect the power of God, who says, "Be and it is." God doesn't need 25,000 years to create. Then there is the spitting that indicates the devil has saliva when he is not physical. Moreover, to imply that the human belly button is the result of the devil's spit is sheer ignorance! Is not the belly button the result of the cutting of the umbilical cord through which the fetus was fed in its mother's womb? This imaginary tale reflects ignorance.

Then there is the creation of the dog. Didn't God create dogs with the rest of the animals in the Garden of Eden? And does God need a dog to scare horses away? Can't He scare the horses Himself if He wants to? Why does God care about a piece of sod to the point that He wants to protect it from the horses? Nonsense upon nonsense!

*Exaggerations*

Following are a few examples of exaggerations in the *Gospel of Barnabas* that further prove its invalidity.

> "Adam and Eve cried over their sin for 100 years." (p. 35)





> "In the days of Elijah there were twelve mountains on which lived 17,000 Pharisees (even though Elijah predated the Pharisees by more than 500 years)." (p. 145)

> "Elijah killed 10,000 priests of Baal." (p. 148)

> "God commanded a thousand, thousand (one million) angels to guard Jesus' clothes." (p. 135)

> "The Romans worshipped 28,000 gods." (p. 152)

> "The number of prophets that God sent to the world was 144,000." (p. 22)

> "The people who have faith without works shall be in hell for 70,000 years." (p. 213)

> "The Archangel Michael shall hit the devil 100,000 times and each hit will be the equivalent of 10 hells." (p. 82)

> "Each eye in hell will cry tears more than the waters of the Jordan River." (p. 55)

*Contradictions*

Further proving the invalidity of the Gospel of Barnabas are its contradictions. For example, it says both that the devil bitterly regretted that he forfeited heaven (p. 157), and that the devil refused to say, "God, forgive me I am a sinner" (p. 120).

There are statements that contradict the Bible. For example, it narrates that Jesus always prefaced all his remarks to people who asked him questions with the words, "You lunatic," and "You fool" (pp. 65, 78, 89, 305). This sharply contradicts Jesus' own words, "Learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:29). It describes King Herod and the Prefect Pilate as regarding Jesus with the highest esteem, and says the high priest bowed at Jesus' feet (p. 98, 244). This completely contradicts the Bible, which says the high priest was against Jesus and sent Him to Pilate and urged that He be crucified.

## Islamic Scholars Testify to the Invalidity of the Gospel of Barnabas

*Testimony of Mohammad Shafik Ghorbal*

According to *The Concise Arabic Encyclopedia*, compiled in 1965 by Prof. Mohammad Shafiq Ghorbal and other scholars,

> "The *Gospel of Barnabas* is a counterfeit book put forth by a European in the 15th century. In describing the political and religious center of Jerusalem in days of Christ, it commits serious errors. And declares that Jesus Himself said that He is not the Messiah, and that an evangelist named Mohammad, would come who would be the Messiah."[237]

Many contemporary philosophers commend the credibility of this *Encyclopedia*, especially Prof. Hassan Jalal 'Aroosi who highly regarded this research work.

As mentioned earlier, the *Gospel of Barnabas* is neither a gospel nor was it written by any of Jesus' disciples. Having been written in the 15th century, and not at the time of Christ, it has major historical, political and geographic errors. Worst, it does not proclaim Jesus as the Christ, but rather Mohammad, which even Muslims cannot accept.

*Testimony of Abbas Mahmoud Al Akkad*

Abbas Mahmoud Al Akkad wrote,

> "Many of the phrases mentioned in the Gospel of Barnabas were written in a literary form similar to the Arabic language that was prevalent in Andalusia. The description of hell in the Gospel of Barnabas is unlike the common belief held by the Jews in Jesus' day. Some of the expressions used had been exported to Europe by Arabs. It is not logical to say that Issa, The Messiah, declared the Gospel in the name of Mohammad. There are many errors that neither a Jew nor a Christian would accept. Also a Muslim who understands the Gospel of Barnabas would not associate himself with it because of the contradictions between it and the quranic texts, such as proclaiming Mohammad to be the Messiah, the Christ."[238]





*Testimony of Khalil Sa'adah*

Sa'adah translated the *Gospel of Barnabas* into Arabic in 1908, adding an introduction to the book in which he confirms, "The most trusted resources agree that this so-called Gospel of Barnabas was written in the Middle Ages."

*Testimony of Islamic historians*

Islamic scholars testify that the *Gospel of Barnabas* was not written until the 14th century AD. "All Islamic historians even until the end of the 14th century attest that Christian gospels are those that were written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John"[239] [240] [241] [242]

*Testimony of Dr. Fatima Mohammad*

Modern scientific references such as *The Youth Encyclopedia* by Dr. Fatima Mohammad attest to the four Gospels but do not mention the Gospel of Barnabas. "The gospels are the first four books in the New Testament and they were written separately. All of them speak about the story of the life of Jesus Christ as told by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John."[243]

An important question is, why wouldn't any Islamic association print the *Gospel of Barnabas* and endorse it?

Any sane person would be overcome by the overwhelming evidence of the invalidity of the *Gospel of Barnabas*. To believe this heresy fulfills Hosea 4:6 in the Holy Bible, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

## The Invalid Prophecy of the Coming of Mohammad

The author of the *Gospel of Barnabas* predicted the coming of prophet Mohammad by name. Some Muslims believe Moses prophesied about the coming of Mohammad, and others go as far as to claim that the four Gospels predicted Mohammad's coming. Muslim commentator Rashid Rida writes, "There are eighteen prophecies that talk about the coming of Mohammad."[244]

Did the Torah and the Gospels truly predict the coming of Mohammad? Upon closer examination, the prophecies in question actually predict the coming of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Islamic commentators tried to prove

they signal the coming of Mohammad, and similar assertions in the *Gospel of Barnabas* reinforce these false claims. I will respond to three of these alleged prophecies about the coming of Mohammad that are particularly popular among Muslims.

**The Quran mentions an illiterate prophet**

The Quran mentions that God spoke to Moses about an illiterate prophet, but only once, in this passage:

> "Those who follow the messenger, the illiterate prophet, whom they find written in what they have in the Torah and the Gospel...So believe in Allah and his messenger, the illiterate prophet, whoever believes in Allah and his word and follows him are the ones who will be successful." (Sura Al-Araf 7:157-158)

Let us discuss these two verses in light of what Islamic scholars have said. Mohammad Druza writes, "These two verses, which mention an illiterate prophet, seem to be incompatible with the sequence of stories about the children of Israel." Note that he is objecting to the sequence of the text. He cannot place verse 157, which says, "...those who follow the messenger, the illiterate prophet," in context with what precedes or follows. Druza continues, "So what is meant by God's answer to Moses? Is it that God's answer is that the good guidance was not for Moses' people but stored for the people of the prophet Mohammad?"[245]

What is meant by God telling Moses "...about whom they will find written in their books the Torah and the Gospel?" It is very strange that God would ask Moses to tell the people to look for what is "written in the Torah and Gospel," when in the time of Moses, the Gospel had not yet been written.

"The illiterate prophet" (Al-Nabi Al-Ami) is spelled and pronounced very much like "the coming prophet" (Al-Nabi Al-Ati) in Arabic. Originally, the text of the Quran had no dots on the Arabic letters. Many Arabic letters are identified through promptings such as dots and dashes. It would have been an easy oversight to place the letter for "m" without the two dots necessary to change it to the letter for "t," thereby obscuring the true meaning that God spoke to Moses about the "coming prophet." This explanation is consistent with Moses' prophecy about Jesus Christ in the





Torah. Jesus Himself said, "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me" (John 5:46).

The narrators of the Quran meant it as we know it today. This is why Uthman burned the other six Qurans and kept one version known as Uthman's Quran, which led to his assassination.[246]

The Quran is repetitive; there is a pattern of repetition of the teachings with the aim of confirming and stressing facts. However, the prophecy of the "illiterate prophet" is mentioned only one time in the 6,235 verses of the Quran and not mentioned at all in any of the hadiths. There are two possible explanations: it could be an evolution of the narrative or a linguistic error.

In reality, "the Torah and Gospel" make no mention of an "illiterate prophet." And since the credibility of both the Torah and the Gospel has been previously established and they have remained the same till this day, clearly the error lies in the sura that says, "Those who follow the messenger, the illiterate prophet, whom they find written in what they have in the Torah and the Gospel."

**Moses allegedly predicted the coming of Mohammad**

Some Muslims believe Moses predicted the coming of Mohammad when he said, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst [from among you], from your brethren [brothers]. Him you shall hear" (Deuteronomy 18:15). They interpret "from among...your brethren" to mean the Arabs, who through Abraham's son Ishmael are half-brothers to the Jews.[247]

Let us explore this viewpoint. The expression, "for you," refers to the sons of Israel, because Moses was sent to the Israelites. The expression, "your brothers," clarifies the preceding phrase, "from among you." The phrase "from among you," refers to the sons of Israel, and the words "from your brothers" is a further indication that He would be of one of the tribes of Israel, specifically the tribe of Judah. There is no reference to the Arabs or the sons of Ishmael in this verse.

Ishmael was not of the tribes of Israel, for Israel descends from Jacob through Isaac (Ishmael's half-brother), while Ishmael was the son of Hagar, a maidservant from Egypt. Since Ishmael was Jacob's uncle, not

his son, it would be illogical to say that Mohammad is one of the brothers of the Israelites. Moses says to the people, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear." Muslims should follow the Quran's advice and "ask the people of the book if you don't know" (Sura Al- Anbiya 21:7).

According to the testimony of the Quran itself, neither the Arabs nor Mohammad are of the descendants of Ishmael. There is no reference in the Quran to Mohammad's genealogy being from the lineage of Ishmael. According to Islamic theologians, Mohammad's lineage is not known to people but known only to Allah himself. The Quran says, "Has not the news reached you, of those before you, the people of Nuh (Noah), and 'Ad, and Thamud? And those after them? None knows them but Allah" (Sura Ibrahim 14:9). Abu Al Kassem Alzamkhashri writes, "No one but Allah knows their meaning. They are so many that no one knows the number but Allah." In addition, Ibn Massoud says about this verse, "It means God has denied mankind the knowledge of their human genealogy."[248]

Mohammad explained genealogy saying, "Genealogists lied because after Adnan the names were Syriac names not of Arabic roots."[249] Al Nahas writes, "Between Adnan and Ishmael there are thirty fathers not known [and he added] And quoting Arwa bin Al Zabir who said, 'we did not find anyone who knew who is between Adnan and Ishmael'."[250]

In his prophecy, Moses was referring to none other than Jesus Christ, who said about Himself, "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me" (John 5:46).

**Jesus' promise of the Paraclete (Comforter) was allegedly a reference to Mohammad**

Sura As-Saff 61:6 says,

> "Issa [Jesus] the Son of Mary said, O Sons of Israel I am a truthful messenger from Allah to you, between my hands is the Torah predicting the coming of an apostle who will come after me named Ahmad."

Ibn Hisham explains this verse as follows: "The Apostle John wrote: 'Whoever hates me, hates the Lord…from now on they fight me and they





think they have overcome me…but the Law had to be fulfilled that they hated me without cause. So when the Comforter comes, the one the Lord will send, the Holy Spirit, He will testify for Me'." And Ibn Hisham adds, "The 'Comforter,' [Manahma] in Syriac is Mohammad in Arabic, and the Paraklete in Greek."[251]

I always like to follow a claim with a discussion based on evidence.

The name of the prophet of Islam in Arabic is Mohammad, as his name is often repeated in many verses of the Quran.

> "What is Mohammad but a messenger and there were before him messengers." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:144)
>
> "What is Mohammad but one of the men from among you." (Sura Al-Ahzab 33:40)
>
> "Believe in what was sent down to Mohammad." (Sura Mohammad 47:2)
>
> "Mohammad the messenger of Allah." (Sura Al-Fath 48:29)

But Sura As-Saff 61:6 is the only verse of the 6235 verses of the Quran that claims that the prophet's name is "Ahmad" and not Mohammad. While the pattern of the Quran is to repeat an issue over and over again, the name Ahmad is mentioned once only and never repeated. It is well known that there are several versions of the Quran, and in the Obi version, there is no mention of "Ahmad."[252]

Concerning the reference Ibn Hisham made to Ahmad being the Paraclete, the translation of the word "Paraclete" as "Ahmad" is a linguistic error. Paraclete is pronounced in the original Greek, "Parakletos," which means "comforter." However, Ibn Hisham's corruption of the Greek word came about through substituting some letters in the Greek word so that it becomes "Pereklitis" which means "the thanked one" (Al Mahmoud) from which is derived the word Ahmad. This corruption through language manipulation is behind Sura As-Saff 61:6 that refers to Ahmad.

In referring to the Comforter as "Ahmad," Ibn Hisham blatantly contradicts the Quran. His interpretation has deviated from the spirit of the Quran; which has often referred to the Holy Spirit as the angel Jibril,

as is clear in Sura An-Nahl 16:102: "Say that the Holy Spirit came down from your Lord of truth." All interpretations of the Quran operate on the premise that the Holy Spirit is the angel Jibril, as Imam Abdullah Yusuf Ali says in his exposition, "The Holy Spirit is the name of the Angel Jibril through whom came the revelation of the Quran."[253]

The Greek word "Parakletos", as it appears in ancient manuscripts of the Bible that date way before Islam, means the Spirit, the Comforter, or the Holy Spirit who comforts believers in this evil world and who turns their sadness into peace and joy and their weaknesses into strength. "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

Jesus Himself repeatedly referred to the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit. "He may abide with you forever" (John 14:16). These words cannot apply to any human being. Jesus says that the Holy Spirit would live inside us. The Holy Spirit is the only One who can abide inside people if they ask Him to come into their lives. Our Lord Jesus said about the Paraclete, "The world cannot receive Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him" (John 14:17). Which human can fit into this description? A human is seen and known, but the Spirit is not seen by human eyes. Another clue from the recorded words of Jesus is that "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you" (John 16:14). The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ. Did the one whom Ibn Hisham claims is the Paraclete (Mohammad) glorify Christ or did he deny His Divinity? Obviously, Christ was not talking about Ahmad but about the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of God.

***

This is another obstacle removed to help Muslims accept salvation through Christ.



# Part 2:
# POLEMICS:
# Exposing Islam

# OVERVIEW

Muslims believe they possess the absolute truth, and this keeps them from accepting any other message. In Part 2, I will be focusing on exposing the flaws of Islam, rather than defending Christianity, with the purpose of demolishing the strongholds that keep Muslims from experiencing the salvation of Christ. These strongholds comprise the following false beliefs:

**The prophethood of Mohammad**

Mohammad had encounters with spirits from the time he was a child. His first wife Khadija encouraged him to pursue these experiences and promoted his identity as a prophet, especially when he began receiving revelations from a spirit named Jibril. Muslims believe these revelations were from God, but the nature of the experiences and the revelations reveals they were of the devil.

**The inspiration of Quran**

Multiple Islamic sources document the existence of multiple versions and variations of the Quran – more than enough to doubt that it is inspired of God or an accurate representation of the so-called Preserved Tablet in heaven.

**The inspiration of the hadiths**

Hadiths, the reported sayings and deeds of the prophet of Islam, contain much material that leads us to question whether these sayings and deeds befit a true prophet of God.

**Jibril an angel from God**

Jibril is the spirit being who appeared to Mohammad and is the source of his inspiration. Mohammad's descriptions of Jibril, confirmed by many eyewitnesses, are characteristic of Satan, not an angel of God.

**Allah the true God**

God Almighty, the true God, must have an identity and character that befit His majesty. Mohammad's Allah has neither.

# Chapter 7: IS MOHAMMAD A PROPHET FROM GOD?

## Mohammad as a Prophet

The Holy Bible instructs us to test prophetic words and to judge whether prophets are speaking a true word from God (Deuteronomy 18:22, Ezekiel 33:33, Matthew 7:15, Acts 17:11, 1 John 4:1). In this chapter, I will examine the prophethood of Mohammad.

### What is a prophet?

*Ibn Tamiyya's definition of a prophet*

Islamic scholar Ibn Taymiyyah provides guidance for discerning prophethood, emphasizing that lying and injustice expose false prophets. He writes, "Those imposters who claimed prophethood like Musailama the liar and Al-Anssi and others...receive their inspirations from demons and only the ignorant are deceived; but the wise are able to discern that their reputation, obscene lying, and injustice expose them are imposters."[254] By measuring the life of Mohammad against what Ibn Taymiyyah says, we believe that all he said about false prophets applies to Mohammad.

Ibn Hanbal exposes Muhammad's lying. He writes, "The Prophet Mohammad endorses lying in three situations: in war; in reconciliating people; and when a husband wants to avoid domestic conflict."[255] As for injustice Mohammad was known for the murder of innocent people. He would take women slaves and sell their children to buy weapons. El-Waqidy records,

> "Upon the captivity of the sons of Qurayza – women and offspring – the prophet of Allah sold some of them to Uthman Ibn Affan and some have been sold to Abdul Rahman Ibn Auf, and some sent to

> Najd, and others sent as captives to El Sham (Syria) with Saad Ibn Ebadaa to sell them and buy weapons and horses."[256]

Ibn Taymiyyah says, "Should I inform you upon whom the devil descends? He descends on every sinful liar; the devil comes down to the man who seeks him and loves his ways, and on him who pursues lying and sin."[257]

*Jesus' definition of a prophet*

Jesus Christ warned us about false prophets, saying, "You will know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). Our Lord Jesus Christ explained who the true prophets and apostles are and what qualities and traits characterize them: love, peace and the message of salvation.

Love:

True worship is expressed in deep love for God and in serving Him obediently without looking for any reward and without feeling obliged to do it. Jesus says, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him" (John 14:21).

In Islam, one's relationship with God is based on bondage, not love. Allah says, "I created the jinn and mankind except to worship" (Sura Adh Dhariyat 51:56). This legalistic relationship is based on observing rules and the performance of duties, such as prayer, fasting, giving alms, etc. Whoever disobeys gets punished and possibly killed. Shinqeti says in his chapter on killing Muslims for neglecting prayer, "It is killing by the sword – and others said it is hitting by the wood until a person dies...and say to him 'pray otherwise we kill you' and continue to repeat it until he either prays or dies."[258]

Jesus taught us to love one another and love even our enemies: "But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil" (Luke 6:35). However, Mohammad says, "And we placed between them enmity and hatred, until the Day of Resurrection" (Sura Al Maedah 5:64).





Peace:

Angels proclaimed the birth of Jesus Christ by singing, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and good will toward men" (Luke 2:14).

Mohammad did not know, nor teach, peace. "So do not weaken and call for peace while you are superior; and Allah is with you and will never deprive you of [the reward of] your deeds" (Sura Muhammad 47:35). Muqatel Ibn Soliman comments on this verse saying, "Do not become weak and call the Arabs to peace when you are superior and victorious."[259] Al Shaybani says,

> "But if Muslims do not have power on their enemies, there is nothing wrong in seeking peace; because peace is good for Muslims in this case. The Almighty said in Sura Al-Anfal 8:61, 'If they inclined to peace, incline, and trust in God,' because it is a form of maneuvering in war. It is the duty of a soldier to focus on keeping strong before achieving victory, same as a baby who starts with feeding on milk then later as a grown-up chews meat. Thus it is clear that Muslims, when weak, should maintain peace and refrain from war until they are strong enough to resume the battle."[260]

Message of salvation:

The most important message of a prophet is to deliver the Good News of salvation from eternal death, as the Apostle Peter declares, "...for you are receiving the end of your faith – the salvation of souls" (1 Peter 1:9). For this purpose Christ came to save us through his death and bring us back into the family of God. Mohammad did not know the meaning of salvation and thus did not have a message of salvation to deliver to his followers.

## How Mohammad began his prophetic mission

Mohammad was born in AD 571 in the year known as the Year of the Elephant.[261] Research into *Prophet Biography* (*Sira Nabawieh*) reveals that Mohammad was born four years after the death of his supposed father.[262] As a child he had supernatural encounters with jinn (demonic spirits). In AD 610 while on a retreat in a cave called Har'a, he encountered a spirit named Jibril and began receiving revelations of the Quran.

Doubting himself, Mohammad inquired of his wife, Khadija. Sheikh Khalil Abdel Karim writes about her influence on Mohammad, that "[t]he revered lady Khadijah assumed a role that took 15 years of her life in the preparation, configuration, manufacturing, rehabilitation, sandpapering, fitting and training of the young man Mohammad of Quraish to become the awaited one."[263]

"Ten years after the descent of the verses [the Quran] on Mohammad, his uncle and protector Abi Taleb died and then Khadijah died after Abi Taleb…his residence in Mecca was occasioned by danger and difficulties after their death and he was filled with the woes of Quraysh. They would throw disgusting things at him while he was praying and eating."[264] The prophet Mohammad found a receptive community in the city of Medina and moved there on Friday, September 16, AD 622, which marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar and Mohammad's transition into political and military power.

*Who appeared to Mohammad in the cave of Har'a?*

The messenger of Allah's prophetic career began with encounters with spirits in the cave of Har'a. According to Islamic heritage and Mohammad's life story, the jinn (devil) appeared to him in different forms.

> Al Halabi: "According to the speech of Amr Ibn Sharhabeel that the Messenger of Allah [Mohammad] said to Khadijah, 'I am concerned that he who called me is a follower of the jinn'." Al Halabi added in the same reference, "Mohammad said to Khadijah, 'I am afraid I lost my mind,' which means being possessed by the jinn."[265]
>
> Fat-hy Radwan: "Mohammad was in doubt about who appeared to him and he was worried it was the devil that came to him."[266]
>
> Malik Bin Nabi: "The prophet poured out his concerns to his compassionate wife Khadijah and shared with her his fears about losing his mind and being touched by the evil one, whom he believed had harmed him."[267]
>
> Dr. Al Bouti: "Mohammad feared the creature that visited him from time to time in the cave, always appearing unexpectedly and he feared it is not an angel coming from God. He was so terrified that his body





> shook and changed color and he said to Khadijah that he is afraid for his sanity from that spirit."[268]
>
> Ibn Algouzie: "Mohammad was afraid that what he sees is from the devil."[269]
>
> Ibn Al-Huseini: "Mohammad was afraid that this was from the devil."[270]
>
> Ibn Katheer: "When Khadijah asked Warqa Ibn Nofal what happened to Mohammad, he answered, 'I am afraid that the creature that appeared to Mohammad is not Jibril; some demons imitate him [Jibril] to deceive the sons of Adam and spoil them and can cause a wise man to lose his sanity'."[271]
>
> Al Bukhari and Muslim: "Mohammad returned with a trembling body until he entered the house where Khadijah was, and said cover me and she covered him until his fears were gone, and he said to Khadijah what happened to me? I am worried for myself."[272]
>
> Badr Al-Deen Ibn Ahmad Alainee: "His speech 'worried for myself' ...[means] that he might have been touched by the jinn."[273]

*How did the belief in whomever appeared to Mohammad change from a demon to an angel?*

Ibn Hisham tells a very bizarre story, nicknamed "the theory of the thighs," about Mohammad's strategy for discerning the spirit.

> "Khadijah said to Mohammad: 'can you let me know when your 'friend' who visits you, comes?' He said, 'I will.' Suddenly at that moment, Jibril appeared to Mohammad so he told Khadijah, 'O Khadijah, Jibril is here.' She said, 'Get up, and sit on my left lap [thigh]. So, Mohammad sat down on her left thigh, she asked: 'Do you see him?' He answered: 'Yes.' She said, 'Turn then and sit on my right lap [thigh];' so, he sat on her right thigh. She asked: 'Do you see him?' He answered 'Yes.' She said: 'come sit between my thighs.' Then Mohammad sat between her thighs. She said: 'Do you see him?' He answered: 'Yes.' Then she lifted her veil and Mohammad was still sitting on her lap, and asked him again: 'Do you see him?' He said:

'No.' She said: 'stand and rejoice; I swear that he is an angel not a devil'."

Abdullah bin Hassan adds, "I have heard my mother Fatma tell Khadijah's account of the incident, she let Mohammad, the prophet of Allah, enter between her body and her clothes i.e. be under her clothes, then Jibril left. She said to the Mohammad: 'this is an angel not a demon'."[274]

Many other references have confirmed the incident, including Tabari Al Zahaby and Al Halabi who add,

"Khadijah wanted to know what caused Mohammad to faint and find if Mohammad was blessed by being the bearer of a divine message; or was it a touch from the devil that attacked Mohammad when he was in Mecca before the Quran descended upon him."[275]

Ibn Al-Atheer: "Khadijah believed him and witnessed that what happened to Mohammad was the truth."[276]

Al Bukhari: "The Messenger of Allah returned, and his body was trembling and rushed to Khadijah and said, 'Cover me cover me'. She covered him until he calmed down, and he said to Khadijah: Oh Khadijah I am worried for myself and then told her what had happened. Khadijah responded: 'Fear not and be happy, I swear: Allah will never disgrace you'."[277]

In one incident, Mohammad "fainted when he was in Mecca before the Quran was given to him." Al Shaybani quotes a story related by Halima, Mohammad's nurse:

"His stepfather told me, I am worried about the boy so let's give him back to his family. Then we took him back to his mother who asked: why are you bringing him back? Are you scared about him from the devil? Halima said 'yes'."[278]

Khadijah's logic was that the angel was embarrassed to see her remove the veil so he quickly disappeared. She thought that what she did confirmed a divine revelation, as Halabi explains, "because the angel cannot withstand looking at unveiled women, only the jinn can."[279] Al 'Askalani comments, "If that were a devil he would not be ashamed."[280]





*The role of Khadijah in confirming and establishing Mohammad as prophet*

Khadijah had a hope that Mohammad would be the prophet of the nation.[281] Ibn Hajar Al Askalani stated, "Khadijah said: be happy my cousin and steadfast, by my soul, I want you to be the prophet of this nation."[282] According to Sheikh Khalil Abdel Karim, "Khadijah was sure that Mohammad is the next-expected prophet of his time."[283] Dr. Bint Al Shat'e confirms Khadijah's role,[284] and Sheikh Khalil Abdel Karim sums up her role in Mohammad's prophethood as follows: "The revered lady Khadijah assumed a role that took 15 years of her life in the preparation, configuration, manufacturing, maturation, sandpapering, development and training of the young man Mohammad of Quraish to become the awaited one."[285] Sheikh Khalil Abdel Karim adds, "In the beginning of the experiment, and for the first five years, Khadijah accompanied Mohammad whenever he went to the cave of Har'a, to guarantee the success of the experience, which means that without Khadijah his success was uncertain."[286]

Clearly, Khadijah played a key role in manufacturing the prophethood of Mohammad.

*An analytical commentary on the creature that appeared to Mohammad in the cave*

Mohammad admitted he saw a demon, as mentioned in many Islamic texts. Khadijah was the one who is said to have proved that the creature was an angel, because, in her experiment, the creature was embarrassed when she uncovered her face. I wonder what kind of angel is ashamed of a woman's face and not ashamed of her and Mohammad getting intimate in his presence. So, this evidence must be dismissed as false.

Khadijah cannot be a witness, because she saw nothing. It was Mohammad who had the vision and she listened to him and made her own assumptions and conclusions. Khadijah's witness is unacceptable according to Islam, because women in Islam are incomplete in mind and religion, so their testimony does not count. This is a law set by Mohammad himself.[287] Furthermore, Khadijah's witness is illegal, because no credible witness can be accepted unless it is verified by two males, or by a male and two females: "And witness the legal witness of your men if there were not two men, then a man and two women, that if one woman forgets, the other reminds her" (Sura Al-Baqara 2:282).

Khadijah is the only one who testified that the creature that appeared to Mohammad was an angel. However, her testimony is invalid and illegal, and her deception is confirmed. Does Mohammad the prophet of Islam need Khadijah's testimony to confirm his prophethood? Who is the authority here? He is supposed to be the prophet, yet she is the only who catechizes him.

The devil controlled Mohammad, as is clear in Sura Al-Hajj 22:52: "And we did not send before you any messenger or prophet except that when he spoke or recited, Satan threw into it some misunderstanding." Ibn Katheer in the interpretation of this verse says, "The messenger of Allah read Sura An-Najm 53 in Mecca and when he got to where it says, 'Have you seen Lat and Uzza and other third Manaat the devil threw on his tongue these pagan names: 'Alghranic Alolaa whose intercession is acceptable'."[288] The devil made Mohammad pronounce and endorse the pagan gods.

*So, who appeared to Mohammad in the cave?*

Mohammad testified that he saw the devil. Khadijah's bizarre narrative about having Mohammad sit on her lap to prove the apparition was an angel does not make sense, and according to the Quran, Khadijah's testimony is neither legal nor credible. Other details ought to be considered.

The books of prophetic biography tell us that this creature who appeared to Mohammad in the cave strangled him three times. Al Bukhari says,

> "The angel ordered Mohammad to read, Mohammad replied: 'I cannot read.' Mohammad narrated: 'The angel carried me away, covered me and strangled me until I lost all my strength, then he released me and said: 'Read;' and I replied 'I cannot read,' then the angel covered and strangled me a second time till I lost all my strength and then he released me and said 'Read,' and I said that 'I am unable to read' then he covered and strangled me a third time and then let go of me."[289]

Does an angel strangle a prophet?

Compare this narrative to the appearance of Gabriel to Virgin Mary and addressing her saying, "Peace to you, O favored one, the Lord is with





you" (Luke 1:28). But Mohammad suffered unexplained fits before these appearances were made to him; and every time when he saw that creature, he got one of those attacks.

> Al Halabi: "When the Quran descended upon Mohammad, he was attacked in the same manner he used to suffer before the revelation. Before the revelation of the Quran, Mohammad would faint, all his body trembled, his eyes closed, and his face convulsed; foam came out of his mouth and he snorted like a camel, so Khadijah told him: 'I will get you a talisman to protect you'."[290]

> Ibn Al-Athieer: "Whenever the revelation came to Mohammad, his face turned red and he would snort like an old camel and his forehead would be covered with sweat even on a very cold day."[291]

These are signs of being possessed by demons. A clear example is given in the Bible.

> "A man in the crowd called out, 'Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams at the mouth; and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him. I begged your disciples to drive it out, but they could not.' 'You unbelieving and perverse generation,' Jesus replied, 'how long shall I stay with you and put up with you? Bring your son here'." (Luke 9:39)

Even while the boy was coming, the demon threw him to the ground in a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the impure spirit, healed the boy and gave him back to his father (Matthew 17:14-18).

The accounts lead us to question what was going on with Mohammad. Was it a demon that threw him into that state?

## Mohammad and Demons

According to both the Quran and Mohammad's biography, he had a history of involvement with demons.

## Mohammad's relationship with demons

*Demonic childhood experiences*

Mohammad's nurse Umm Halima narrated,

> "Mohammad's foster brother came to us panicked and told me and my husband 'Two men wearing white robes grabbed Mohammad, laid him down and split open his stomach and tossed him over.' We hurried and found Mohammad on his feet, but his face was pale, so we hugged him warmly and asked him, 'What's wrong son?' He said, 'Two men came to me and lay me down and opened my stomach and took something out of it.' So, we returned to the tent and my husband said, 'I suspect that this boy is possessed so return him to his family before this gets known.' So, we carried him back to his mother. She said, 'Why do you bring him back? I liked that he is staying with you.' I told her, 'I was concerned about him so thought it best to bring him back to you.' She pressed me to keep nothing from her, and asked, 'Are you afraid he is possessed?' I said, 'Yes'."[292]

*Strange experiences when Jibril gave Mohammad the revelation*

Islamic books discuss in detail what happened to Mohammad when the spirit Jibril visited him.

> Ibn Sa'ad writes in *The Severity of the Inspiration on the Prophet*, "When the inspiration came down on him [his sadness would be severe] and his face would change, and he would become like a drunkard. Al Dousi said: 'I saw the spirit come on the prophet while he was on camel back. It growled and twisted its legs to the point I thought it would be split apart'."[293]
>
> *The Aleppo Biography* states, "When the [spirit of inspiration] of the Quran came down he would be touched by what had touched him before. He was touched by what appeared to be like clouds after the thunder and his eyes would be darkened and he would growl like a camel."[294]
>
> *Sahih Al Bukhari* says, "Aisha asked the prophet of Allah, 'How does the inspiration come to you?' He said, 'Sometimes it comes to me like





> the sound of bells; and it is really tough, and it causes me to lose consciousness'."[295]

Imam Ibn Hanbal explains the sound of the bells.

> "One of Aisha's slaves who drove her around told him that if she heard a bell and figured the sound came from in front of her, she would order her slave to stop so that she would not hear it and if she thought it came from behind her she would order him to hurry, so she would pass it. She said that Mohammad told her that he had a follower from among the jinn."[296]

*The devil in the cave of Har'a*

We read in the *Sahih Al Bukhari*,

> "Aisha said that when Mohammad was in the Cave of Har'a, the angel came and said, 'Read,' and the messenger of Allah said, 'I can't read,' so he choked him until he was about to die and then he let go of him. This happened three times. Mohammad was shaking violently until he went to Khadijah, and he said, 'Cover me, cover me.' So, she covered him until he overcame his fear and calmed down. And he said to Khadijah, 'Khadijah, What is wrong with me? I am worried about myself'."[297]

To understand the expression, "I am worried about myself," let's return to *The Aleppo Biography*, which explains "that the messenger of Allah said to Khadijah, 'I fear that the one who calls me to follow him is a jinn, and I'm worried that I am possessed by demons'."[298]

*The devil appeared to Mohammad as Jibril*

Islamic historians record that Mohammad was susceptible to receiving inspiration from the devil disguised as Jibril.

> *Tafseer Al Qurtubi*: "Ibn Abbas said: 'The white Satan is the one who came to Mohammad in the image of Jibril to whisper to him the inspiration'."[299]
>
> *Tafseer Muqatel Ibn Suleiman*: "When the prophet was sent, Satan said to the devils: 'who can stand against this prophet who came out of the earth?' A devil called The White, said 'I can,' and came and found him

in the house of Al-Safa. The White devil appeared to him in the image of Jibril; to give him the inspiration."[300]

*Tafseer Al Razi*: "Satan, who is called, The White, came to Mohammad in the appearance of Jibril to whisper to him the inspiration."[301]

*Tafseer Al Qurtubi*: "Ibn Abbas said that the devil who is called The White came, to the messenger of Allah in the semblance of Jibril and cast into the prophet's recitation: 'the high-flying cranes [metaphor for three goddesses worshipped by the Meccans] their intercession is to be desired.'[302] He also said: "Ata' said, 'the White Devil that used to come to Mohammad in the image of Jibril was trying to mesmerize him'."[303]

*The Aleppo Biography*: "Some experts explained that Mohammad had an enemy from among the devils, the demon who is known as 'The White,' and he used to appear to Mohammad in the image of Jibril."[304]

*Tafseer Al Razi*: "Ibn Abbas said in Atta's narration that a devil called 'The White,' came to the messenger of Allah in the image of Jibril."[305] He also says, "Muqatel mentioned that the devil called 'The White,' intended to bewitch the prophet but Jibril pushed him away from Mecca till he ended up in the ends of India."[306]

*Mohammad sought refuge from the devil's whispers and temptations*

Sura Al-Araf 7:200 says, "If an evil suggestion comes to you from Satan, seek refuge in Allah who is hearing and knowing." Al Qurtubi interprets this verse to mean, "When the Almighty's verses came down: 'You are forgiven.' Mohammad said: 'But Lord what about the wrath?' So, this verse came down: 'It was the evil one who tempts and is a tempter'."[307] Al Wahidiy comments, "If an evil idea comes to you from the devil meaning if you see things from the devil and are tempted, seek refuge in Allah which means ask Allah for deliverance from that situation. Allah listens to your requests and is all knowing of what you are encountering."[308]

Al Qurtubi explains, "The prophet in the hadith says: He would seek refuge from the nudging of Satan and his evil whispers."[309] Ibn Katheer adds, "The prophet of Allah, used to say: 'I seek refuge in Allah, the





hearing and knowing from the devil who is stoned, from his temptations, and his whispers'."[310]

*How Mohammad's devil became a Muslim*

Islamic books agree that the prophet Mohammad had an evil spirit and that devil became a Muslim.

*Sahih Muslim*: "Narrated by Abdullah Ibn Masoud: The prophet of Allah said, 'Everyone of you has a Kareen [an evil spirit] from among the demons.' And they asked him, 'And you, O messenger of Allah?' And he said, 'And me too but Allah granted me victory over him and he became Muslim, so he urges me to do good deeds'."[311]

Imam Fakhr El Din Al Razi: "The prophet said, 'Satan runs in the bloodstream of the sons of Adam and there is none of you who does not have a devil.' They said, 'Even you O messenger of Allah?' He said, 'even me but Allah helped me, and I converted him to Islam,' and the hadith confirm this testimony."[312]

*Sahih Ibn Khazima*: "Maymouneh, Mohammad's wife, performed the ritual purification of ablution then stood next to Mohammad and mentioned Allah. The prophet said to her: 'Your devil woke you up.' She said, 'By my father and my mother O prophet, do I have a devil?' He said: 'Yes, and so does everyone else including me but Allah helped me, and I converted mine to Islam'."[313]

*Sahih Muslim*: "Orwa quoting Aisha the prophet's wife said that the prophet of Allah left her at night and she said: 'I was jealous, and he came and saw what I did and said: 'What is wrong with you O Aisha that you were lured'?" I said, 'What's wrong with me that I would not be jealous for someone like you?' And the prophet of Allah said, 'Did Satan come to you?' She said: 'O prophet of Allah. Do I have a devil with me?' He said, 'Yes and so does every human being.' She asked, 'And you too O Prophet of Allah?' He responded, 'And me too, but Allah helped him convert him to Islam'."

Exposition of Mohammad Al Shanqiti: "Whoever follows the devil is nothing but an infidel, a devil worshipper whose true lord is the devil no matter how well he puts it; because good words do not change facts."[314]

## Mohammad's relationship with jinn

Islamic traditional books and the hadiths speak about Mohammad's relationship with jinn. The word "jinn" comes from the Arabic verb "janna" meaning "to hide or conceal." Jinn are believed to be invisible spirits created by Allah out of smokeless fire who operate in a parallel world to humans with powers to possess the minds and bodies of other creatures. They are accountable to Allah, and required to worship him and follow Islam.[315]

*Jibril urged Mohammad to meet the jinn*

Al Mawardy says in *Personas of the Prophethood*,

> "The jinn came to the prophet Mohammad in Batn Nakhl so Jibril came down to him with this verse and warned him about the arrival of the jinn and urged him to go meet them."[316] Al Mawardy continues, "It is either that Jibril told Mohammad about the demons before they put a spell on him, or Jibril introduced Mohammad to the demons before they performed witchcraft on him."[317]

*Mohammad spent a whole night with demons*

We need to seriously consider this situation because it has a profound impact. I will refer to this occurrence in both the Quran and books of Islamic tradition. The Quran says, "And when We inclined toward thee [Mohammad] certain of the jinn, who wished to hear the Quran…" (Sura Al-Ahqaf 46:29), and "Say, [O Mohammad], It has been revealed to me that a group of the jinn listened and said, 'Indeed, we have heard an amazing Quran' " (Sura Al-Jinn 72:1).

Al Qurtubi says this happened to Mohammad twice.

> "The demons came to the prophet of Allah in two campaigns one of them in Mecca and that is the one mentioned by Ibn Masoud and the second in a Batn Nakhl and that is the one mentioned by Ibn Abbas.[318]

Al Razi comments about these encounters saying,

> "When Mohammad despaired of winning the people of Mecca, he went out to Al Ta'if to call them to Islam. On one occasion in Mecca, he recited Quran at the dawn prayer and one of the noble demons





> passed by the city of Nassiben and heard the Quran. Anas said, 'I was with the messenger of Allah in the mountains of Mecca and we met a sheikh who was walking with a cane and Mohammad said: 'His gait and the rhythm of his singing resemble the jinn.' and asked him 'from which jinn are you?' He said, 'I am Hama son of Heem son of Laqees son of the devil.' He said: 'Issa [Jesus] son of Mary told me 'if you find Mohammad give him my greeting and I did, and I believe in you.' And he said, 'Peace be to you, and to Issa [Jesus].' Mohammad said 'and peace to you Oh Hama. What would you like?' The devil responded: 'Moses taught me the Torah and Issa [Jesus] taught me the Injeel and I ask you, Mohammad to teach me the Quran' and so he taught him 10 Suras."[319]

To objectively analyze this narrative, we should carefully examine the background. Mohammad had despaired of Mecca and was expelled from Al Ta'if, so the demon used his vulnerability to seduce him. The demons convinced Mohammad that they were from the noblest ranks exemplified by the appearance of the old man in the mountains of Mecca, and Mohammad identified him as a demon from his music and his gait. How did Mohammad recognize him? Was he accustomed to these encounters? And the demon deceived Mohammad, claiming that Jesus greeted him with "Peace." How would Jesus trust demons that he cast out of people? The demon also deceived Mohammad claiming that he learned the Torah from Moses and the Injil from Jesus and he wanted to learn the Quran from Mohammad. Doesn't the fact that Mohammad swallowed Satan's bait just expose his naiveté?

There are other accounts that tell about the relationship between Mohammad and the jinn. According to *Sahih Muslim*,

> "Ibn Masoud said, we were in the company of the Messenger of Allah one night and then we lost him. We searched for him in vain in the valleys and on the hills and in our despair, thought that he has either been taken away by the jinn or has been secretly killed. We spent the worst night ever. At dawn, we saw him coming from the direction of Har'a.' We said: 'Messenger of Allah, we have been looking for you everywhere, but we could not find you and we had the worst night ever.' The prophet said: 'There came to me a messenger from the jinn and I went along with him and recited to them the Quran.' He

showed us the traces of the jinn and their ashes. The jinn asked him for provisions and he said: 'Every bone on which the name of Allah is recited is going to be covered with flesh, and the dung of (the camels) will become food for your animals.' The Messenger of Allah then warned us: 'Don't perform Istinja [cleaning away whatever has been passed from the anus with bones or animal dung] because this is food for your brothers, the jinn'."[320]

*The jinn inspired an entire sura of the Quran*

Sura Al-Jinn 72:1-14 speaks of the witness of a group of jinn to the Quran and Islam.

> "Say O Mohammad: It has been revealed to me that a group of the jinn listened and said: 'Indeed! We have heard an amazing Quran. It guides to the right path, and we have believed in it. And we shall never associate with our Lord anyone. And it teaches that exalted is the nobleness of our Lord; He has not taken a wife, or a son. And that our foolish one has been saying about Allah an excessive transgression. And we had thought that mankind and the jinn would never speak a lie against Allah. And there were men from mankind who sought refuge in men from the jinn, so they only increased them in burden. And they had thought as you thought that Allah would never send anyone as a messenger. And we have sought to reach the heaven; but found it filled with powerful guards and burning flames. And we used to sit therein in positions for hearing, but whoever listens now will find a burning flame lying in wait for him. And we do not know therefore, whether evil is intended for those on earth, or whether their Lord intends for them a right course. And among us are the righteous, and among us are others not so; we were off divided ways. And we have become certain that we will never cause failure to Allah upon earth, nor can we escape Him by flight. And when we heard the Guidance, we believed in it. And whosoever believes in the Lord will not fear deprivation or burden. And among us are Muslims in submission to Allah, and among us are the unjust. And whosoever has embraced Islam – those have sought the right course'."

One wonders if these verses are on the "Preserved Tablet" (Allah's book of fate and his program for the universe, existing in heaven). If they are,





would it be fair to say that the demons were prophets like Mohammad and knew ahead what was written on the Preserved Tablet? Or did the demons make up a sura of the Quran using language characteristic of the Quran, or have they become like Mohammad's Allah, inspiring and sending down verses? This leads us to ask, how can Mohammad claim that demons can never come with verses like the Quran, as mentioned in Sura Al-Isra 17:88: "If mankind and the jinn gathered in order to produce the like of this Quran, they could not produce the like of it, even if they were to each other assistants."

Al Mawradi narrates in his exposition, "Ibn Masoud and Al Dahaq said: 'There were demons' seats in the lower skies to hear what is happening in the world but after Allah sent his messenger Mohammad the sky was purified from the demons who were stoned with falling stars'."[321] How could Allah send the jinn and demons to Mohammad to listen to the Quran when Allah would stone them with falling stars for trying to listen to the Quran in heaven?

*Mohammad uses jinn to spread Islam*

Mohammad used to send some of the jinn as messengers to spread Islam. As it says in all the books of Islamic tradition, including Al Tabari, "Ibn Abbas narrated that the messenger of Allah made them messengers to their people."[322] Ibn Abbas says specifically, "There were seven individual demons of Nassiben, so the messenger of Allah commissioned them to take Islam to their own people."[323]

**Hadith of the high-flying cranes (the "Satanic Verses")**

A story has been narrated in this regard and become popular as the story of "The Gharaniq," also known as "The Satanic Verses." According to the Exposition of Ibn Soliman, "Gharaniq means angels."[324] According to this story, Mohammad the prophet had been engaged in reciting Sura An-Najm (53) to a group of skeptics. When he had recited verses 19-20 containing the names of three pagan deities, Al Lat, Al Uzza and Manaat, Satan caused him to recite two more sentences that were not part of the sura. Al Tabari comments,

> "The messenger of Allah sat among a crowd of the people of Quraysh whom he cared to please. At that moment, he hoped he would get

> nothing from Allah that would make them turn against him. So, Allah gave him: 'By the star when it descends, your companion [Mohammad] has not strayed, nor has he erred,' So Mohammad recited it and then he said: 'Have you considered Al Lat, Al Uzza and Manaat the third, the other?' [Sura An-Najm 53:19-20]. Satan responded: 'Those high-flying cranes, their intercession is to be desired.' So, Mohammad repeated Satan's words. When he left, Jibril came to him and said: 'I did not come to you with these two verses.' So, Allah's messenger said: 'I credit to Allah what he did not say'."[325]

Abu Leith Al Samarqand comments on Mohammad receiving another verse following Jibril's admonishment.

> "Ibn Abbas quoted Abi Saleh who said that Satan came in the semblance of Jibril and recited Sura An-Najm 53 'when it descends,' by the Ka'ba until he concluded with: 'Have you considered Al Lat, Al Uzza and Manaat the third, the other' Satan cast upon his tongue: 'these high-flying cranes, their intercession is to be desired.' When the polytheists heard him say this they were pleased. In the end Mohammad bowed and the Muslims and the infidels bowed together. When Jibril came to him he said, 'I didn't come to you with these verses,' then came down the verse, 'And We did not send before you any messenger or prophet except that when he spoke [or recited], Satan threw into it [some misunderstanding]. But Allah abolishes that which Satan throws in; then Allah makes precise His verses. And Allah is Knowing and Wise' (Sura Al-Hajj 22:52)."[326]

Al Tabari comments on Sura Al-Hajj 22:52 saying, "The reason behind this inspiration is that Satan made Mohammad's tongue twist to utter these pagan names "Al Lat and Al Uzza And Manaat," which were not from Allah of the Quran and there was a heavy gloominess that fell on the messenger, but Allah comforted him with these verses."[327]

Whatever the opinions about the Hadith of the High-Flying Cranes, it is established by Jibril's testimony that Satan was behind this inspiration to Mohammad, just as he was with the verses of the Sura Al-Jinn 72.

### Mohammad and witchcraft

Islamic books of tradition mention that Mohammad was under witchcraft. *Mosnnaf in Hadith and Antiquity* narrates that "Aisha said the messenger of





Allah was under a spell of witchcraft by one of the Jews of Bani Zurayk named Lobed Ibn Al 'Assam to the point that the messenger of Allah imagined that he did things he didn't do."[328] In *Sahih Al Bukhari*, Aisha is reported as saying, "The messenger of Allah was under witchcraft to the point that he thought he had sex with women that he didn't have sex with. Sofyan assured that this is the most intense form of witchcraft."[329] The *Mosnad* of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal quoted Aisha who said, "For six months the messenger of Allah imagined that he came (to these women) but that did not happen at all."[330]

Doesn't this contradict what is written elsewhere in the Quran?

> "So, when you recite the Quran, [first] seek refuge in Allah from Satan. Indeed, there is for him no authority over those who have believed and rely upon their Lord. His authority is only over those who take him as an ally and those who through him associate others with Allah." (Sura An-Nahl 16:98-100).

Does this mean that Mohammad allied himself with Satan? Was he associating Satan with Allah to the point that Satan was able to control him through witchcraft?

## Sex in Mohammad's life

Sex played a key role in the life the prophet of Islam. Mohammad was obsessed with women and sex. He took many wives to himself and had a burning sexual desire that was justified through fatwas that condoned his sex practices.

### Mohammad was obsessed with women and sex

The prophet wasn't concerned with anything as much as he was concerned with sex.

> Ibn Sa'ad quotes Annas who heard the prophet say, "I don't love anything in the world except women and perfume."[331]
>
> Al Qurtubi: "Mohammad used to be busy with women and perfume."[332]

Al Munawi: "Mohammad loved women and perfume. He said: 'the hungry would be fed and the thirsty given drink, but my desire for women cannot be satisfied'."[333]

Ayoub Al Zar'ey quotes Annas who said about the prophet, "[H]e was endeared to worldly interests: perfume and women, he could survive without food and drink but not women."[334]

Ahmad Bin Hanbal: "The prophet said that he loves nothing in the world as much as women and perfume." Al-Ramly confirmed it, saying, "He said so and it is valid."[335]

**Many wives**

*Legislation regarding marriage*

From the beginning, the general rules of marriage in Islam allowed a man to have four wives and concubines at one given time. "Have sex with what you have of women two, three or four, if you are able to be just with them otherwise one, and what your right hand possesses [concubines]" (Sura An-Nisa 4:3).

Special exceptions applied to the prophet but not to other Muslim men.

"O Prophet, indeed We have made lawful to you your wives to whom you have given their due compensation and those your right hand possesses from what Allah has returned to you and the daughters of your paternal uncles and the daughters of your paternal aunts and the daughters of your maternal uncles and the daughters of your maternal aunts who emigrated with you and a believing woman if she gives herself to the prophet [and] if the prophet wishes to marry her, [this is] only for you, excluding the [other] believers. We certainly know what We have made obligatory upon them concerning their wives and those their right hands possess, [but this is for you] in order that there will be upon you no discomfort. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful." (Sura Al-Ahzab 33:50)

*Prophet Mohammad's wives*

Imam Al-Qurtubi mentions the prophet Mohammad's wives by name and provides the history of his marriage to each one. He writes, "The prophet had wives with whom he had sex, others whom he married but never had





sex with, and those whom he engaged but never married [and he mentioned their names]."[336]

Imam Mohammad Al-Salhi Al-Dimashqi mentions the names of fifty-five wives and concubines with whom the prophet had sex, not to mention those women who voluntarily offered themselves to him. The number went up to sixty-six women divided into four categories: thirteen wives, six concubines, thirty women he married but did not have sex with and seventeen women whom he engaged but did not marry.[337] Here are some of Mohammad's wives:

Wives whom he legally married and had sex with:[338]

Wives he lost to death:

- Khadijah daughter of Khowailid was married twice before she married him. Bohaireh commanded her to marry Mohammad and according to Sheikh Khalil Abdel Karim, she groomed him for his prophetic calling.[339]
- Zainab bint Khuzayma Al Hilalya was the widow of one of the Muslim martyrs. She died two months after marrying Mohammad.
- Rayhanah Bint Zayd bin Amr was a Jewish prisoner whom he tried to convert to Islam.
- Zaynab bint Jahsh was married to Zayd bin Haritha, his adopted son. When he saw her in her tent half-naked, he said, "Glory to the one who turns hearts," and a quranic verse descended upon him telling him to marry her. "So when Zayd had no longer any need for her, We married her to you in order that there not be upon the believers any discomfort concerning the wives of their adopted sons when they no longer have need of them. And ever is the command of Allah accomplished." (Sura Al-Ahzab 33:37)[340]
- Jewirieh bint Al Harith was a Jewish prisoner who had been given to Thabit bin Qays. Aisha, Mohammad's favorite wife, prevented him from meeting her for fear that he would lust for her, but he saw and took her to be his wife.[341]

Wives who lost him to death:

- Aisha bint Abi Bakr Al Sadiq was married to Mohammad when she was a nine-year-old girl and he was 53.[342]

- Hafsa bint Omar bin Al Khattab scandalized him when she caught him cheating on her, in her bed, with a maidservant. It was her assigned day and he was supposed to have sex with her.[343]
- Umm Salmeh was also known as Hind bint Abi Umayya Al Makhzumiyeh. Abu Bakr had proposed to her before Mohammad, but she refused him. Aisha was jealous of her beauty.[344]
- Umm Habiba bint Abi Sufiyan was Muawiyeh's sister. She immigrated to Ethiopia with her husband Abdullah bin Jahsh who converted to Christianity. Mohammad sent for her and married her.[345]
- Mimouna, the maternal aunt of Khalid bin Waleed, gave herself to Mohammad. He married her during pilgrimage [Umrah]. Ibn Abbas says, "The prophet's marriage to Mimouna was unlawful."[346]
- When Sawdeh bin Zama grew older, Mohammad wanted to divorce her; but she gave up her assigned day of sex to Aisha, so he did not divorce her.[347]

Women who died after being contracted in marriage:

- Khawla bint Al Hathiel died on the road before arriving to him
- Sharaf bint Khalifa Al Kalbiyeh, sister of Duhieh Al Kalbi, died before he had a chance to have sex with her [348]
- Sana bint Asma' bin Al Salt was betrothed to Mohammad according to the traditions, but died before Mohammad had gotten to her[349]
- Qatila bint Qays Al Qandiyeh died before getting to Mohammad from Yemen

Fifteen wives with whom he did not have sex[350] [351]

Concubines:

- Maria the Christian was an Egyptian slave whom the Byzantine governor Muqawqis gave Mohammad. She is believed to have given birth to Mohammad's only son Ibrahim, who died in infancy. "Aisha said: 'Maria was given to the prophet of Allah together with her cousin; he slept with her once and she became





pregnant. The prophet isolated her from her cousin, but evil liars claimed that the prophet had a need for a child and so claimed another man's child. Maria had little milk for nursing, so she substituted with goat milk, which helped the baby get better. The prophet brought the boy to me [Aisha] and asked, 'How do you see him?' I said: 'feeding on goat milk has been good for him.' He asked me if the baby is taking after him and I said: 'I don't see that he resembles you.' The prophet of Allah had heard the stories people were telling behind his back, so he said to Ali: 'Take this sword and go and kill Maria's cousin wherever you find him'."[352]

- Zalikha Al Qurziyeh[353] was the maidservant of Zaynab bint Jahsh. Al-Hakim An-Nisabori says, "And Zaynab bint Jahsh gave the prophet her maid. He had abandoned Zainab sexually, because of her complaints about him when he slept with Safiya bint Huyey on her assigned day. But right before his death, the prophet took a renewed interest in Zaynab and had sex with her, so she said, 'I don't know how to reward you, so I will give you my maid servant'." [354] She gave him a beautiful maidservant taken in captivity.[355]
- The Fazarya Girl was taken from Mohammad's companion Salma. Salma narrated, "We had gone with Abi Bakr, following the instructions of the prophet of Allah, to fight the people of Fazara. Once we got close, Abi Bakr commanded us to attack and we killed those who were ahead of us. Then I looked and there were those who took refuge by the mountain, so I chased them. Fearing I might not be able to catch up, I aimed an arrow and it fell between them and the mountain and so I captured them and drove them to Abi Bakr; among them was a woman and her daughter, the most beautiful among Arabs. Abi Bakr granted me the daughter. I did not touch her all the way to the city. The next day, the prophet of Allah met me in the market and said, 'Oh Salma give me the woman' and I said, 'By Allah O prophet of Allah, I like her, and I have not touched her yet.' The prophet of Allah was silent and left. The following day the prophet of Allah met me in the market and said, 'O Salma give me the woman' and I said, 'O Prophet of Allah I swear to Allah that I like the girl and I have not touched her yet.' Then he was quiet and left until later

and we met in the market and again he said, 'O Salma give me the woman,' and threatened me. So I said, 'O Prophet of Allah I swear to Allah I haven't touched her, but she is yours O Prophet of Allah'."[356]

When the prophet wanted to marry non-Muslim women, Aisha said, "He will legally wed foreigners and will not give us any attention. So, the wives of the prophet agreed that this is unfair, and they should seek refuge from him in Allah. To the ones who told him: 'I seek refuge with Allah from you,' he responded: 'Go to your family' and he divorced her."[357]

Wives who sought God's refuge from Mohammad, so he divorced them:

- Fatima bint Al Dahhaq bin Sufiyan Al Kelabiyeh.[358]
- Umrah bint Al Jun (Al Janiah Al Qandiyeh)[359]
- Asma' bint Al Nu'man
- Malika bint Ka'ab Al Laithi sought refuge from Mohammad when Aisha said to her, "Are you not ashamed from the killer of your father?"[360]

Women whom he divorced

- Qandiyeh, cousin of Asma' bint Al Nu'man, sent the prophet an arrogant response when he called her to come to him, saying, "I am from the tribe who does not go to anybody but whoever wants me should come to me," so he divorced her.[361]
- Umayma bint Al Nu'man answered the prophet's summons to "give me yourself," saying, "Does the Queen give herself to a despicable man?" So, he divorced her.[362]
- Hind bint Yazid Al Makhzumiyeh refused his courtship and then relented but he did not have sex with her and divorced her.
- Umrah bint Yazid Al Kelabiyeh had white spots on her body, so he divorced her.[363]

This is the narrative about the women he brought to his house, not to mention the many others whom he enjoyed, as was given permission in Sura An-Nisa 4:24 which says, "So, for whatever you enjoy of sex from them, give them their due compensation as an obligation, and there is no blame upon you."





## Burning sexual desire

Mohammad's burning sexual desire was obvious to all. His lust drove him to have sex with his wives even during the menstrual cycle. He was caught cheating on his wives, and he endorsed a lot of weird sexual practices.

*Having sex with wives during the menstrual cycle*

The Quran forbids having sex with women when they are menstruating. "If they ask you about menstruation say seclude the women and do not go near them until they are purified" (Sura Al-Baqara 2:222). This plainly states that menstruation is considered impure in Islam. So, it is prohibited to go near a woman until she is cleansed. However, Mohammad used to approach his wives during menstruation.[364]

Abu Dawood and Al-Bayhaqi say about some of the wives of the prophet that if the prophet wanted to have sex with a menstruating woman; he would throw a robe on her private parts and do what he wanted to do.[365] Abu Dawood and An-Nisai report about Maymouneh that the prophet of Allah had sex with her during her monthly period. Moreover, Al Bukhari, Muslim Abu Dawood, Al Tormodhi, An-Nisai, and Ibn Majed quote Aisha who said about her own personal experience with Mohammad, "The prophet of Allah, peace and prayers upon him, if I was menstruating, he would tell me to cover and he would have sex with me."[366]

Aisha narrated an incident that happened during the Pilgrimage.

> "We argued with the prophet [as] we prepared ourselves for the Day of Sacrifice and Safieh began menstruating and the prophet desired to have sex with her so I told him, 'O Messenger of Allah, she is menstruating.' He said, 'Is she refusing me?' They said: 'O Messenger of Allah, she menstruated on the Day of Sacrifice.' He said 'Get out let me be alone with her'."[367]

*Marital Infidelity*

Mohammad the prophet cheated on Hafsa his wife by having sex with his Egyptian concubine Maria in Hafsa's bed during her absence. He then promised to refrain from having sex with Maria and asked Hafsa to keep the secret, but Hafsa told his other wife Aisha. Mohammad kept his word and kept away from Maria for a month. Then he received Sura At-Tahrim

66:1-5, which says, "O prophet, do not forbid what Allah has approved for you and Allah is forgiving."

Al-Suyuti records the story as he heard it from Ibn Abbas.

> "Hafsa went to visit her father's house so the prophet sent for his slave Maria and slept with her in Hafsa's house. When Hafsa returned home, she found Maria in her house and she got very jealous, so she told Mohammad after he had dismissed the slave girl, 'I saw who was with you and by Allah you have made me feel so bad.' The prophet said: 'To make it up for you I will tell you a secret so guard it.' She said, 'What is it?' He said, 'I will never in future sleep with Maria.' So Hafsa shared the secret with Aisha and told her that the prophet promised to keep himself from this slave girl."[368]

According to Al Alusi,

> "The prophet was seen with Maria on the day assigned for Aisha, and Hafsa knew about it and he said to her 'Conceal the matter, and I will prohibit myself to be with Maria and I tell you that Abi Bakr and Omar will reign after me.' But she betrayed secrecy and told Aisha."[369]

Al Qurtubi and Ibn Katheer confirm the narrative.

> "The prophet swore to Hafsa that he would never touch his concubine Maria and said to her, 'Don't tell anyone.' But she told Aisha and he actually isolated Maria 29 days, and a verse came upon him: 'O prophet do not forbid what Allah has allowed for you just to please your wives' [And Al Tabari continues] so we were told that the prophet of Allah redeemed his oath and had sex with his slave girl."[370]

*Perverse sexual practices*

The prophet had unreasonable and unacceptable sex practices that go as far as being criminal, such as having sex with a little girl and being sexually obsessed with minors. Following is a list of documented unacceptable practices of Mohammad.

- Mohammad hugged Zaher, a man he was fond of, from the behind.[371]
- A man hugged Mohammad from the behind, under his clothes.[372]





- He used to suck the tongue of boys and girls, Aisha and his grandchildren.[373]
- Mohammad would kiss between the breasts of his daughter Fatima."[374]
- He had sex with a minor, his wife Aisha, who was 9 years old when he married her.[375]
- He desired a baby girl who was still nursing to marry her.[376]
- Mohammad slept with a dead woman in the grave on the day of her burial.[377]
- He would expose himself by lifting his gown, so they could kiss his thighs.[378]
- He would expose his thighs in front of people.[379]
- He used to wear women's clothes to meet people.[380]
- He would meet people and hug them while he was nude.[381]
- The spirit Jibril would come to him with revelation when he was wearing Aisha's clothes.[382]
- He questioned a donkey about his desires for a female donkey.[383]
- He used gross sexual words in his speech.[384]

*Revelation came upon Mohammad while wearing Aisha's dress*

There are twenty references in Islamic heritage that confirm that the revelation came to Mohammad after Khadijah's death while he was wearing Aisha's dress.

> Al Bukhari quoting Mohammad: "The revelation came to me while I was in Aisha's dress not in any other woman's dress."[385]

> Al Naysaburi narrating a speech of the prophet: "O Om Salmah do not hurt me in Aisha, I swear that God's revelation did not descend upon me, except when I was wearing Aisha's dress."[386]

*Mohammad's fatwas condoning abnormal sexual practices*

Adult breastfeeding

Abu Jaffar Al Nahass tells a story about the breastfeeding of adult men which goes like this:

> "Aisha said that Sahla the daughter of Suhail came to the prophet of Allah complaining that her husband Abu Hudhifa gets jealous when

Salim, the slave whom they brought up as their own child, comes into the house. She asked for the prophet's wise counsel because Abu Hudhifa, her husband, had said that Salim should not enter the house again. The prophet told her that the best thing to do is to 'breastfeed Salim and then he becomes your son by getting your milk and your husband won't be jealous of him anymore.' She responded: 'How can I breastfeed him when he is a grown man?' The prophet said to her 'I know he is an adult!' And the story goes that Sahla came back to the prophet afterwards and said, 'I swear to God O Prophet of Allah that I no longer see any signs of jealousy on the face of my husband (Abi Hudhifa)'."[387] According to Al Nahass, "Based upon this counsel, Aisha used to command her sister Umm Kolthoum and the daughters of her brother to breastfeed men who entered their home."[388]

The muhalil

The Quran mandates a process of contracting a second marriage after a triple repudiation or divorce through a "muhalil."

> "If he divorced her three times she cannot return to him unless she has intercourse with another husband" (Sura Al-Baqara 2:229-230).

This verse says that if a husband has divorced his wife by saying "I divorce you" three times, then the couple cannot remarry unless the wife first marries another man (the muhalil) and consummates the marriage. According to the Quran, sex with a muhalil makes the wife permissible (halal) to her first husband.

Even more disgraceful is the story Al Bukhari tells about a woman who discovered the muhalil was impotent.

> "The ex-wife of Refa'a AlQuradhi came to the prophet of Allah and said: 'O prophet of Allah Refa'a divorced me three times and I had sex afterwards with Abdel Rahman bin Al Zober Al Quradhi but it was not fully consummated because the man is impotent.' The prophet said 'you probably want to remarry Refa'a? Never! Until you taste the semen of the muhalil and he tastes yours'."[389]

This teaching cannot be the life or teachings of a prophet from God because he does not have the moral values that reflect God. That is why it





is necessary to encourage a Muslim to do some research to know the reality of who Mohammad is and understand whom he believes in.

## Mohammad and Terrorism

Mohammad spread terrorism, violence and murder. It was Mohammad who said, " 'Oh, people of Quraysh, I have come to you with a slaughter.' When the heads of Quraysh heard this, they were dumbfounded; it was as though birds had landed on their heads. They fell in complete silence."[390] He also said, "Allah Almighty sent me with the sword in my hand before the Last Hour. And my sustenance was provided for me from under the shadow of my spear. Allah made those who oppose my command to be humiliated and be made inferior."[391]

### Assassinations

Mohammad killed with no mercy men and women alike and did not spare the elderly, nursing mothers or the newlywed, as will be explained in the following discussion.

*The women Mohammad assassinated*

Mohammad assassinated many women, one of whom was Umm Qirfa, a 120-year-old woman who was one of the wisest in her time and highly respected among her people; but she exercised freedom of expression and objected to Mohammad. To silence her, Mohammad empowered a group of warriors under the leadership of Zaid Ben Harretha to raid Umm Qirfa's tribe. They captured her and tied each one of her legs with a rope and tied the other end of each rope to a camel, and then spurred the two camels in opposite directions, splitting her in two. In describing her brutal death, Ibn Hisham said, "Umm Qirfa was brutally killed by Qai's Ibn Al Muhassar, when he tied a rope on each of her legs and then tied the other end of the rope to two camels while she was an aged woman."[392]

Another woman Mohammad assassinated was Asma' Bint Marwan. Mohammad sent Uma'yr Ibn Ouday to her home to assassinate her. When he returned and reported to the prophet that he had accomplished his mission, Mohammad said, "You have helped Allah and his messenger, O Uma'yr! This is a victory by assassination." In describing Asma' Bint Marwan's death, Ibn Hisham writes,

"A blind man by the name of Uma'yr Ibn Ouday, was sent by the prophet to get rid of her. He came to her bedroom on a pitch-dark night while sleeping with her five children. He groped in the dark till he identified her. She was nursing her infant. He removed the suckling infant away from her breast and stabbed her with his sword piercing her chest until his sword penetrated her back. In the morning Uma'yr went to the mosque and prayed the Morning Prayer with the prophet Mohammad. Then he [Mohammad] asked him; 'Have you killed the daughter of Marwan?' and he answered; 'Yes'. Then Uma'yr fearing any evil consequences because of killing her, asked the prophet about it who commented: 'Two goats won't butt their heads about her assassination.' [i.e. It is totally acceptable]...Then the prophet turned to the people around him and said: 'If you like to see a victorious man of Allah and his messenger, then look at Uma'yr Ibn Ouday.' Omar Ibn al-Khattab, said: 'Look at this blind man who stresses in obedience to Allah.' Then the prophet said: 'Don't call him blind but call him Uma'yr the 'man full of insight'."[393]

According to Al-Balazri, Mohammad assassinated four women upon entering Mecca.

"And the prophet ordered the killing of six men and four women. The men were: (1) Akramah Ibn Abi Jahl, (2) Habbar Ibn Al Aswad, (3) Abdullah Ibn Saad Ibn Abi Sarah, (4) Miqys Ibn Sababah, (5) Al-Huweireth Ibn Naquyd and (6) Ibn Khatal. As for the four women, they were: (1) Hind Bint Autbah, (2) Sarah; the female slave of Amr Ibn Hashem Ibn Al Muttaleb, and (3 & 4) the two female slaves of Hilal Ibn Abdullah Ibn Al-Akhtal Al-Adrami."[394]

*The men Mohammad assassinated*

Mohammad ordered the assassination of many men. One of them was a 120-year-old man by the name of Abu 'Afaq, and he did not have mercy on his old age. Ibn Hisham says,

"An old man of the Clan of Bani Amr Ibn Ouf, known as Abu 'Afaq was a very old man; 120 years old...not a Muslim...A man named Salim came to him and found him asleep on a mattress in the yard, he plunged the sword through his liver until it penetrated into the mattress."[395]





He also ordered the assassination of Kaa'b Ibn Al Ashraf, of which Islamic sources have a full account.

"Five of the prophet's companions were sent to kill Kaa'b Ibn Al Ahraf, among them were Mohammad Ibn Muslimah and Abu 'Abs. When Kaa'b Ibn Al Ashraf saw them he was alarmed, but since he had company, they told him that they came seeking help. He asked: 'How can I be of help to you?' Their spokesman said: 'We came to borrow money and you can keep our weapons till we pay you back.' Since he had company, they said they would come back later. When they returned at night, they asked him to come down to speak to them. As Kaa'b was getting ready to leave his house, his wife got very concerned and pleaded with him not to go alone and send for other men to accompany him, but he refused. When he went to meet them, they smelled a perfume, so they asked him what the scent was; he replied that it was his wife's perfume. So, some drew closer to smell his head and when they did, they grabbed his head and said: 'Kill the enemy of Allah.' Just then, Abu 'Abs stabbed him on the side, while Mohammad Ibn Muslimah killed him with his sword."[396]

Ibn Abi Al-Haqaiq was another man Mohammad ordered to be killed. Ibn Hisham narrates the story of his assassination.

"Some of Banu Khazraj learned that Ibn Abi Al-Haqaiq was in Khai'Bar and they asked the prophet of Allah to grant them permission to go kill him, and he authorized it...A group of five men from the Khazraj from Bani Salma went to carry out this mission. Meanwhile, the prophet assigned Abdullah Bin 'Ateek to be their leader...Upon arriving to Khai'Bar at night, they went straight to the house of Ibn Abi Al-Haqaiq, got into the house and bolted all the doors. Ibn Abi Al-Haqaiq was in the attic so when they called out his name, his wife came out and asked who they were, and they said they were Arab travelers looking for hospitality. She led them to where her husband was and said; 'here is your host, come on in.' They followed her into the room, bolted the door, and rushed upon Ibn Abi Al-Haqaiq with their swords where he was lounging. When the wife saw they were armed, she began screaming. One of the men aimed his sword at her. When they began striking Ibn Abi Al-Haqaiq with their swords, Abdullah Bin Anees stabbed him in his stomach and killed

him. They returned to the messenger of Allah and informed him that they had killed the enemy of Allah. However, they disagreed in their account of how it happened; each one of them claiming to have done it. Then the messenger of Allah said: 'Hand me your swords,' and they did. He looked at them and said about the sword of Abdullah Bin Anees: 'This sword killed him; I can see traces of food on it'."[397]

Al-Imam Al-Nasafi narrated the story of another man Mohammad wanted dead, but he was finally spared because of the intervention of Uthman Ibn Affan.

"Abdullah Ibn Saad Ibn Abi Sarh; a scribe who used to write down the revelation the prophet dictated him. Mohammad dictated: 'And we created man...thereafter we developed him into another creature, in marvel at the complexity of man,' Abdullah said: 'So, blessed be Allah the fairest of creators!' Then the prophet said: 'Write this down; for thus it has been revealed.' Abdullah was filled with doubts about the nature of the revelation that Mohammad received and said: 'If Mohammad is truthful then I receive a prophesy as much as he does, but if he is a liar, then what I said is as good as what he says.' After this incident, Abdullah renounced Islam and returned to Mecca."[398]

An Internet website published a story about this Abdullah Ibn Saad Abi Sarh.

"In the eighth year of Hijra, Mecca was conquered, and there were eleven people (eight males and three female) that the prophet ordered to be found and executed, no matter where they were hiding, even if they took refuge in the Kaaba itself. Abdullah was on the 'wanted' list. Not all were assassinated, only some, for some were pardoned after their relatives, friends, siblings or spouses interceded on their behalf to the prophet. Abdullah Ibn Abi Sarh was among the ones who were pardoned, as he was considered the 'milk-brother' [babies nursed by the same woman would be considered siblings] of Uthman Ibn Affan. When Abdullah heard that the prophet had ordered his execution, he hid in the house of Uthman, and when Uthman found him, Abdullah said to him: 'Oh my brother, I have chosen to come to you, so keep me safe, and go to Mohammad and plead on my behalf, for if Mohammad sees me, he will strike me, for my crime is the greatest of





crimes, but I have come repenting.' Uthman then replied: 'But you should come with me.' Then Abdullah said: 'If Mohammad sees me, he is going to strike me in the neck, and his companions are already out looking for me everywhere.' Uthman then said: 'Come with me and he won't kill you, Allah willing.' Then Uthman held his brother Abdullah Ibn Abi Sarh by the arm and came to the prophet, then Uthman said: 'O, prophet of Allah, his mother would carry me and let him walk and nurse me before feeding him and she considered me as her flesh and blood [so much that I was treated better than her own son], so please grant him pardon.'

"Uthman pleaded with the prophet to accept Abdullah's oath of allegiance, but the prophet remained silent even after Uthman had begged him several times. Mohammad was hoping that the ones who had made a vow to kill Abdullah would get up and kill him, fulfilling their promise. When Uthman saw that no one attacked, he approached the messenger of Allah, kissing him on the head and saying: 'O messenger of Allah please accept his oath of allegiance.' Finally, the prophet relented and accepted Abdullah's oath and pardoned him, saying: 'I do,' and let him go. As soon as Uthman and Abdullah left, the prophet turned to his company and said to them: 'What was it that prevented any of you from killing Abdullah?' Ubaid Bin Bashar responded: 'O prophet of Allah, We did not know what you had in mind, why did you not give me a signal?...I will follow you all the way just point him to me and I will strike his neck'."[399]

*Mohammad ordered genocide*

Mohammad even ordered a wide-ranging genocide when he massacred all the men of the Jewish tribe of Bani Qureiza – around one thousand men at one time. Al Suhaily speaks of the judgment of Bani Qureiza.

"Ibn Is'haq said, 'Then they surrendered, and the messenger of Allah confined them in Medina in the quarters of Bint Al Hareth. Then the messenger of Allah went out to the market of Medina and dug trenches. Then he sent for them and struck off their heads in those trenches as they were brought out to him in batches and they were...900. And as they were being taken out in batches to the prophet, they asked Kaa'b Bin Assad: 'Oh, Kaa'b, what do you think

will happen to us?' He replied, 'Don't you see that those of you who are taken away do not return? By Allah, it is death!' This went on until the prophet killed them all'."[400]

There are many others whom Mohammad executed with the sword of Islam, not counting the many invasions and official wars he had.

*Raids, wars and robbing caravans*

Historian Ibn Hisham recorded a series of raids, saying,

> "According to Mohammad Ibn Is'haq Al-Muttalibi, the messenger of Allah participated in twenty-seven different raids, among them was the raid of Waddan, also known as the raid of Al Abwa', then Al Buwat raid from Radhwa, then the raid of Al-AsHar'a, from Batne-Yanbu', then the first raid of Badr, then the major raid of Badr...etc."[401]

He also mentioned the thirty-eight military brigades and regiments that followed Mohammad.[402]

*Racism and hatred*

The hadiths reveal that Mohammad harbored hatred towards the Jews and Christians.

> *Sahih Muslim*: "Omar Ibn Al Khattab heard the messenger of Allah saying; 'I will expel the Jews and Christians from the Arabian Peninsula and will allow the Muslims only to reside there'."[403]
>
> Abi Huraira quoting the messenger of Allah: "Do not greet the Jews or the Christians before they greet you; and when you meet any of them on the road force him to go to the narrowest part of the road."[404]
>
> Omar Ibn Abdel Aziz quoting his father who overheard the prophet: "When a Muslim dies, Allah sends a Jew or a Christian to Hell in his place."[405]
>
> Abi Burdah quoting his father who quoted the prophet: "On the Day of Resurrection some Muslims will come bearing on their backs heaps of sins like great mountains, then Allah will forgive them, unload their sins and pile them on Jews and Christians."[406]





Mohammad conducted numerous raids on the Jews of Medina. He killed the men and took captive the women and children. He would often send the slaves to Syria, where they were sold, and used the proceeds to purchase weapons and horses. Al-Bukhari explains,

> "Ibn Omar said that Jewish warriors fought and were killed. The messenger of Allah sent Sa'd Bnu Zaid Al-Ansari with prisoners from Bani Qureiza to Nasujd, and divided their wives, children and properties among Muslims...and traded some for horses and weapons. He killed all the Jews of Bani Quinqua' who were in Medina...and Bani Haritha Jews and all the Jews in Medina."[407]

Mohammad continued spreading terror, violence, and murder, and devout Muslims who are committed to the Islamic shari'a law follow his example by spreading terrorism in the entire world, from East to West.

## Mohammad's Genealogy

This section focuses on the genealogy of Mohammad the prophet of Islam. There is in the books of Islamic tradition a bizarre story that the length of the pregnancy of Mohammad's mother was four years. Because Mohammad's father Abdullah died a few months after his marriage, and his mother Amina did not have another husband, and the birth of Mohammad took place 4 years later, Islamic scholars agreed that Amina was pregnant for four years!

**Marriage of Mohammad's father Abdullah to his mother Amina**

In a very strange circumstance, Abd Al Muttaleb and his son Abdullah (Mohammad's father) got married in one ceremony on the same day. Ibn Sa'ad writes,

> "Amina was the daughter of Wahb so Abd Al Muttaleb Ibn Hashem Ibn Abed Manaf Ibn Qusai went to him with his son Abdullah and he asked for Amina the daughter of Wahb to be Abdullah's wife. On the same day, the father himself betrothed Hala the daughter of Wahb to be his wife. Both Abed Al Muttaleb and Abdullah got married in the same ceremony."[408]

The marriage of Abdullah and Amina resulted in Mohammad. Ibn Sa'ad adds, "He slept with Amina daughter of Wahb and she became pregnant with Mohammad the prophet of Islam,"[409] and "the messenger of Allah, peace be upon him was conceived, and Abdullah died at the age of 25."[410]

**Mohammad was born four years after his father died**

Ibn Sa'ad continues the narrative with reference to the birth of Mohammad's uncle Hamza: "So Hala bint Wahb, who was pregnant by Abdel Muttaleb, gave birth to Hamza Ibn Abdel Muttaleb and Hamza was the uncle of the messenger of Allah."[411] Note that Hamza was older than Mohammad. The two fathers got married on the same day. Abdullah, the father of Mohammad, died within months of his marriage. Mohammad and Hamza should have been the same age if the two wives got pregnant on the day of their weddings, or Hamza should have been younger than Mohammad if his mother became pregnant after Amina (Mohammad's mother) became pregnant.

It is impossible that Hamza would be older than Mohammad because the father of Mohammad died the same year that he got married and it is impossible that Amina would have conceived Mohammad after the death of her husband, his father.

*What do books of heritage say about the ages of Mohammad and Hamza?*

*The Aleppo Biography* says, "Hamza was four years older than the prophet of Allah and this is based on verified discussions that Hamza was nursed by Thawiba with the messenger of Allah. Then he adds: 'Unless they were nursed at separate times'."[412] This establishes that Hamza was four years older than Mohammad as it says that he "was four years older than Mohammad."

> Ibn Abdel Barr on Hamza: "He was four years older than the prophet of Allah, peace be upon him."[413]
>
> Al Balazri: "Hamza was martyred, in the battle Ohod, at the beginning of the 32nd month after the Hijra and he was 59 years old."[414]
>
> Ibn Sa'ad: "And Hamza was killed, Allah's mercy be upon him, on Sunday at the beginning of the 32nd month after the Hijra and he then was 59, and was four years older than the messenger of Allah, peace be upon him."[415]





Here is something to consider. "If Abdullah the father of Mohammad and Abdel Muttaleb, the father of Hamza, were both married on the same day, and Abdullah died in the same year of his marriage, how could Hamza possibly be four years older than Mohammad? Whose son is Mohammad? Is he the son of Abdullah even though he was born four years after Abdullah's death?

*A stigma on Mohammad's genealogy*

Mohammad denied that Amina committed adultery.

> Ibn Sa'ad: "It was said to the prophet of Allah, that here are people from Qindah who allege that he is one of them, so the prophet said: 'God forbid that my mother is accused of adultery or my father slandered; I am the son of Al Nadr Ibn Kinanah'."[416]
>
> Mo'amar Ibn Al Mathni: "It was said that the prophet said: 'We are sons of Al Nadr Ibn Kinanah we don't slander Amina or slander our fathers'."[417]
>
> Al Anbari: "The prophet said; 'we are sons of Al Nadr Ibn Kinanah, we don't slander our fathers or blame our mother Amina'."[418]
>
> Al Bihqui: "Abbas Ibn Abdel Muttaleb, uncle of the prophet said to the prophet, 'Quraysh sat and studied their ancestries and they symbolized you like a Palm tree in a meadow.' The messenger of Allah responded: 'I am not the product of adultery'."[419]
>
> "The messenger of Allah: 'I am a legitimate product of marriage not adultery'."[420]

The people of Quraysh compared Mohammad's origins to a dunghill. Ibn Sufyan Al-Fasawi quotes Abbas who said, "O prophet of Allah the people of Quraysh sat and recounted their records and said you were like a palm tree born out of a reduced stump. Qabwa"[421] Ibn Ahmad Al-Azhari says, "Qabwa, means an error. It is one of the fallen names."[422] Al-Zamakhshari explains, "The Qabba is the garbage dump, the origin of 'Qabwa' it is from the household dirt if you sweep it."[423]

Mohammad was angered by the people of Quraysh saying that he was from the garbage heap.

Abu Na'eem Al-Asbahani records, quoting Abbas Ibn Abdel Muttaleb: "O prophet of Allah the people of Quraysh met together and went over their records and they said that you sprung out like a palm tree, from the dump. [He continued]: The prophet of Allah was angered."[424]

Al Bayhaqi quoted Al Abbas who said: "O messenger of Allah, The people of Quraysh met together in secret and when they met us they changed their countenance, so the prophet of Allah was filled with great anger."[425]

Abu El-Fida 'Imad Eddeen said: "Al-Hafez Al Bayhaqi expounded on the dignity of the prophet and his family quoting the uncle of the prophet who said: 'O prophet of Allah the people of Quraysh meet one another with joy and warmth but when they meet us they show a stern unfriendly attitude. At this the prophet of Allah was filled with great anger'."[426]

*Amina's testimony about being pregnant with Mohammad*

Amina's testimony about her pregnancy implies that she was pregnant more than once.

Al Halabi: "His mother used to say, 'I was pregnant with him and I could barely feel his weight. Either he was very light, or it was his greatest blessing'."[427]

Al Suyuti: "Ibn Is'haq and Al Tabrani and Al Bayhaqi said; 'His mother said I was pregnant with him, but I have never felt a lighter pregnancy than his'."[428]

Ibn Katheer: "She said, 'I was pregnant with him. But I have never been pregnant with a baby lighter than him'." This is a famous discourse that spread among biographers and historians.[429]

**The reality of Mohammad's birth four years after his father's death**

*Practices of the jahiliyyah, the "Age of Ignorance"*

How could Abdel Muttaleb accept the situation that his grandson Mohammad was born so long after the death of his father? This is a huge shame that cannot be tolerated. The term "jahiliyyah" is used pejoratively





to describe the state of ignorance and barbarism in pre-Islamic Arabia. It refers to a time before Arabia had an inspired prophet (Mohammad) and revealed book (Quran).[430] Various sexual practices existed alongside legal wedlock. Let's examine some of the traditions and common practices of the Age of Ignorance.

Group sex, according to Al-Mawardy, "is the situation where the males in a tribe share one woman sexually."[431] An example of group sex is given by Al Halabi quoting Amr Ibn Al As.

"Four men had sex with one woman and they were: Al As; Abu Lahab; Omiya Ibn Khalaf and Abu Sofyan Ibn Harb. She had a baby so they all claimed fatherhood. However, the woman chose Al As defending her choice that Al As was generous to her daughters."[432]

Commodity sex occurs when a husband suffering from male infertility sends his wife to another man to have an intercourse so that she becomes pregnant. In such cases, the woman is not allowed to return to her husband until her pregnancy is confirmed and verified.

Aisha gathered the sex practices of the age into one story.

"There were four kinds of sex practices in the Age of Ignorance: one recognized sex is in a regular marriage where a man asks for the hand of a maiden in marriage, and he is expected to offer her a dowry; another kind of sex was a man, suffering male infertility, instructing his wife to go have sex with another man; a third type of sex is a sex party where 10 males have sex with one female. When she gives birth she can gather them together and decide which one of them is the father. The fourth kind of sex is when many people have sex with a prostitute who hangs banners on her door. If she becomes pregnant and gives birth she could gather the men and choose one of them and give him the baby as his own."[433]

Although these sexual practices were part of the Arab culture and not considered dishonorable, nevertheless they were nothing to boast of and were not comparable to legal wedlock that was highly regarded.

*Opinions of Islamic theologians about Mohammad's genealogy*

Scholars are not able to turn a blind eye to the fact that Mohammad was born four years after his father's death; however, they have tried to find sensible explanations.

> Imam Malek: "There was a woman whose husband had disappeared; so she was made to wait 4 months and ten days to make sure she is not pregnant before she was free to marry again. At the end of the waiting period, she re-married. However, four months and a half later, she gave birth to a baby boy. Her husband went to Omar Ibn Al Khattab and told him about this. He called some women and asked their opinion and one of the women explained, 'I will tell you about this woman. She carried the first man's baby, but it became still in her womb and when her second husband had sex with her, the fetus recovered life,' and this made perfect sense to Omar Ibn Al Khattab who gave the baby to the first husband."[434]
>
> Al Halabi: "It is said that Malek stayed in his mother's womb_two years and Al-Dahhaq Ibn Mozahim Al Tab'ai was in his mother's womb two years." Al Suyuti said, "Malek remained in his mother's womb three years and the honorable Malek said that his neighbor gave birth to three baby boys in twelve years. Each pregnancy lasted four years."[435]
>
> Qurtubi: "Ibn Al Arabi, stated that if it's possible for a baby to be in its mother's womb five years, it's possible for a fetus to stay 10 years or more than that in its mother's womb."[436]

Sheikh Mohammad Ali Jum'aa, the Grand Mufti of Egypt, recently made a fatwa that the period of pregnancy scientifically is 13 months; but according to religion it is 4 years even if the husband wasn't present with the wife and did not touch her during this time. This fatwa was published in an article, "How can a wife whose husband died four years before the arrival of her baby be chaste?" In the article, Prof. Dr. Mahmoud Fawzi wrote,

> "If we assume her husband travelled to another country for four complete years and wasn't home so obviously, didn't have sex with her because of his travels, and if he came back four years later and





> found her pregnant and asked, 'What is this?' And she answered: 'What is in my womb is your son.' Should he believe her? And the Mufti responded: 'Sure, he should believe her, and trust that she has not committed adultery'."[437]

From "Religion and Life" by Dr. Ali Jum'aa:

> "The length of a pregnancy is four years. The wife of Mohammad Ibn Ajlaan Imam Al-Medina was pregnant four times and each time her pregnancy lasted four years." Dr. Jum'aa said that according to doctors, "a fetus doesn't stay in its mother's womb more than 13 months but – we men of the Islamic Sharia – do not judge one as an adulteress because her pregnancy lasted three years after the death of her husband. But if her pregnancy lasts one day longer than four years then she is an adulteress."

This is the fatwa of Dr. Ali Jum'aa, the Grand Mufti of Egypt. How can Muslims in the 21st century believe this? There is not one case in history of a fetus staying in its mother's womb for the durations claimed. I demand some valid published research by the professors of Medicine at the Al Azhar University that supports this claim.

The question remains unanswered: Whose son is Mohammad? Is he Abdullah's son?

### The genealogy of Jesus

In contrast, Jesus' genealogy, recorded by the Gospel writers, clearly establishes His legal lineage, His physical lineage and His divine nature as Son of God. The New Testament opens with the Gospel of Matthew proclaiming His legal lineage from King David through Joseph (Matthew 1:1-17). Joseph's role in God's plan was to be Jesus' legal father according to Jewish law by claiming Jesus as his son and naming Him Jesus (Hebrew "Yeshua") according to God's word to him (Matthew 1:20-21). This lineage makes Him the legal heir to David's throne.

Jesus' physical birth through Mary entitles Him to become Redeemer of the human race. According to the prophet Isaiah, Mary was a "virgin betrothed" (Hebrew "alma"):

> "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin [alma] shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel [God with us]" (Isaiah 7:14).

A virgin betrothed was considered legally married from the time of engagement by Jewish law. Mary's genealogy recorded in Luke 3:23-38[438] reveals she was also of David's line. Both genealogies confirm that Jesus fulfilled God's word through the Old Testament prophets that He would come from the line of King David (2 Samuel 11b, 16; Isaiah 9:7) and His word through the Angel Gabriel's prophetic announcement to Mary that her son would sit on "the throne of His father David" (Luke 1:32).

Jesus' divine lineage is recorded in the Gospel of John.

> "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God…No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him" (John 1:1, 14).

Almighty God Himself looked after the complex details of Jesus' genealogy so that all the requirements of the law would be met: physically, Jesus would be born of a human; legally, Jesus would be entitled to the throne of David; spiritually, Jesus was the Son of God.

***

Islamic accounts of Mohammad's life reveal he does not possess the qualifications to be a true prophet of God. His sexual obsessions and perversions, his relationship with and susceptibility to demons and his violent acts fall far short of standards set by Jesus Christ and even by Islamic scholar Ibn Taymiyyah. His uncertain genealogy has led Muslim apologists to make preposterous claims. I pray Muslims will realize that following Mohammad's example will not win them favor with God.





# Chapter 8: IS THE QURAN INSPIRED BY GOD?

Researching the authenticity and validity of the Quran is a huge undertaking. In this chapter I will discuss a few of the relevant topics. Consult *The Encyclopedia of Christian Islamic Debate*[439] for further research into the following topics:

> Inspiration of the Quran; Attempts at compiling the Quran; The differences between the Qurans; Multiplicity and variations of quranic texts; Burning the Qurans; Manuscripts of the Quran; Quran and the Preserved Tablet; Grammatical, historical, geographic and scientific errors of the Quran; Foreign words in the Quran; Abrogation in the Quran; Sources of the Quran

Muslims believe the Quran was revealed to Mohammad by Allah through the so-called angel, Jibril. In the previous chapter, I discussed how Satan deceived Mohammad by appearing to him in the image of an angel. The Bible teaches us, "And no wonder! For Satan transforms himself into an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14). Mohammad himself confessed that he saw a demon, but his first wife Khadijah convinced him that it was an angel not a devil. Satan continued to reveal the Quran to Mohammad in Mecca for thirteen years, then in Medina for ten more years. This is the truth about the Quran.

## Attempts at Compiling the Quran

### The first attempt

There were three major attempts to compile the Quran. Regarding the collecting and coding of the Quran, the book *Islamic Facts in the Face of Suspicions of Skeptics* says that the purpose of the first attempt was "to collect the manuscripts written by different scribes of the revelations and put them together so that they become a reliable reference for reciters of the Quran."[440]

The chapter entitled "Quranic Science" in *The Islamic Encyclopedia*, records how the Quran was first collected in the time of the prophet.

> "The collection was assigned to two groups, the first group memorized the text while the second preserved it in writing. Writing outlives people and that is why the prophet took great care about the writing of the Quran for he had very serious concern about the language. When a passage would come down to him that he would call the scribes, among whom were Ali Ibn Abi Taleb, Abi bin Ka'ab, Zayd bin Thabet, and Muawieh bin Abu Sofyan, and recite, and they write it down on whatever material is available to them, like 'Al-Ruqa,' pages made of animal skins, white stones, bones or palm leaves."[441]

**The second attempt**

According to references recorded in the hadiths,

> "The first Collection of the Quran into books was in the days of Abu Bakr Al Sadeeq. When he found that many of the reciters of the Quran died in battles, Omar told Abu Bakr to compile the Quran in a book [mushaf].
>
> "Omar bin Al Khattab noticed that many of those who had memorized the Quran were being killed in battles especially the Battle of Yamama in the year 11 AH, one year after Mohammad had died. He approached Abu Bakr and asked that he compile the Quran into a book [mushaf] and Abu Bakr asked Zayd Ibn Thabet to take this responsibility, and thus the Quran was compiled in the 'Seven Ahruf' [different languages]. This mushaf was kept by Abu Bakr, then handed over to Omar after his death and then to Hafsa, Omar's daughter after Omar's death. It became a reference for Uthman Ibn Affan then he returned them to Hafsa. After Hafsa's death, Marwan Ibn Al Hakam, the governor of Medina took Hafsa's Quran, which was considered the original reference of Mohammad's recital, and destroyed it without trace." [442]

**The third attempt**

A very important attempt to compile the Quran was made in the time of Uthman Ibn Affan. According to *Perfection of Quranic Science*,





> "Uthman saw a strife arise among Muslims because of the differences between the so-called seven 'ahruf' [languages] of the Quran so he commanded that the collection be repeated in the year 25 AH. He gathered the different Qurans – seven different Qurans including the version that was with Hafsa before it was destroyed. When Uthman saw that there were seven Qurans, he burned six and kept one."[443]

How can six Qurans be burned out of existence? This is a serious issue. The Uthmani version of the Quran that remained did not have any diacritical marks that distinguish one letter from another of similar form; the addition or subtraction of diacritical marks radically alters the meaning of an Arabic text, thereby potentially altering Allah's book.

**Compiling the Quran during the Umayyad Empire**

Because the Arabic alphabet had not yet fully developed the use of vowels, the Umayyad Empire in Iraq began to compile a new Quran with diacritical marks and vowels to avoid errors in reading, which proved to be problematic.

*The Arabic Encyclopedia* acknowledges, "When there were many errors in the recitation of the Quran they sought the help of Nasr bin 'Asim, a very smart preacher, who managed to solve the problem by using more sophisticated synonyms than the ones commonly used and lots of rhetoric and poetic references."[444]

From 40–96 AH/AD 660–714, Hajaj Ibn Yousef made a new comparison between vowels based on the diacritical marks and those found in all the books that research the Quran. A contract was made with Nasr Ibn Aasem to resolve this issue and correct the Quran. In *The Book of Qurans*, Sajistani explains, "Al Hajaj Ibn Yousef changed in the Quran of Uthman eleven letters that were primarily in Sura Al-Baqara 2."[445]

Was not the Quran kept on the "Preserved Tablet"? Did it not come down from the "Preserved Tablet"? And wasn't it said to Mohammad, "Read"? He said, "I can't read." It was said, "Read and your Noble Lord will educate you with the pen." So how can letters be changed? How can manuscripts be burned? These issues are not resolved till now.

## The Shiite view on the Quran's compilation

There are no fewer than thirty elders from among the Shiite imams who have theories regarding the compilation of the Quran. I will reference a few below.

Imam Abu Mansour Al Tabarsi: "When the messenger of Allah died, Ali gathered the Quran and came with it to those who believed in Islam. When Abu Bakr opened it he found in it many embarrassments, then Omar said with a passion: 'O Ali, I am telling you again there is no need for it,' and Ali took it and left. So they appointed Zayd Ibn Thabit who was a reciter of the Quran and Omar said to him: 'Ali brought a Quran that has all the embarrassments to the believers and it is our opinion to write a Quran and drop from it these scandals and embarrassments.' So when Omar became Caliph he asked Ali to hand in the Quran, and they distorted it among themselves."[446]

Al Tabarsi: "When Allah mentioned the stories of crimes in the Quran, he included the names of the criminals, but the Companions of Mohammad deleted these names."[447]

Nemat Allah Al Jaza'iri: "The Quran that is available to the people was inscribed in Uthman's handwriting and Uthman was given the title 'Imam' and he burned all the other versions; and copies were sent from His Highness to the different countries and regions. And this explains the linguistic errors that violate Arabic grammar."[448]

Al Jaza'iri also says: "During his caliphate, Omar Bin Al Khattab asked Ali to send him the original Quran that he had compiled. But Ali realized that Omar intended to burn or destroy it like the Quran of Ibn Masoud and this would get people to believe there is no Quran except then one inscribed by Uthman, so he did not send it. When later Ali became caliph, he could not reveal the version of the Quran he had because it exposed the corruption of the more popular version. The Quran that Uthman approved, fell into the hands of reciters and they too had their share of making changes just as Uthman and his companions did, and they too, changed some words."[449]





Al Hashimi: "The Imam Ali did not correct the Quran during his caliphate because of the 'taqiah' and that there would not be an excuse on Judgment Day for those who corrupted the Quran and changed it. So he said that the imams did not work to produce the true Quran lest the misconceptions would drive some to abandon their Islamic faith and go back to their prior paganism."[450]

Theologian Al Ardibili: "Uthman killed Abdullah Ibn Masoud after he forced him to leave the Quran that was with him, furthermore, he obliged Abdullah to recite the Quran which was written by Zayd Ibn Thabit that Uthman personally endorsed. Some claimed that Uthman commanded Marwan bin Al Hakam and Ziyad bin Samra, the scribes to take from the Mushaf [Quran] of Abdullah what they approved and to delete what they didn't approve."[451]

Scholar Abu Hassan Al 'Amili: "I know that the current version of the Quran has undergone a number of changes after Mohammad's days; and those who compiled it, dropped many words and verses and the Quran that Allah preserved is the one that Ali compiled and preserved until he gave it to his son Hassan."[452]

Maytham Al Bahrani: "Uthman Ibn Affan gave the people the Quran of Zayd Ibn Thabit and burned the other versions, thus losing what was in the inspired Quran."[453] [454]

Imam Mohammad bin Hassan Al Safar: "Abi Jaffar Al Sadiq said in his book, *Views of the Classes*, 'The claim that the Quran was compiled precisely as it came down to Mohammad is a lie; the only ones who preserved it as it came down are Ali bin Abi Taleb and the Imams'."[455]

Imam Mohammad Taqi Al Qashani: "What someone said about the Quran being compiled as it came down from Allah is a lie, the only ones who preserved it as it came down are Ali bin Abi Taleb and the Imams."[456] [457]

Imam Zayn Al Abadeen Al Karmani, an exemplary scholar of the Rabaneen: "The method of collecting the Quran proves that there was a distortion and deletion that happened to the Quran…And that the Quran that is preserved is only with the Hidden Imam."[458]

Imam Abu Al Qassim Al Qufi: "Quoting Abi Bakr Al Sadiq: 'when we wanted to gather the Quran we went into the city and invited anyone who had a part of the Quran to come forward with it, on condition that there must be at least two witness to verify the authenticity of any one text' – and he set this condition lest they bring to him what was written by Ali, who by that time had inscribed most of the Quran, from start to finish in the format it came down in; so the condition was set lest there be any distortion."[459]

Imam Al Bakr Al Majlassi: "There is no chapter about the method of compiling the Quran and this proves that it was changed." He listed 47 changes in the Quran.[460]

Imam Al Nouri Al Tobrosi wrote *Final Decision in Proving the Distortion of the Book of the Lord of Lords* [Quran].[461] He was able to collect many narratives that prove his claim that the Quran has been distorted. Below are some of his findings.

"Rumors spread about the compiling of the Quran, the reason it was compiled, the lack of experience in knowing how to compile it and that its writing is different from the writing of the believers."

"It was up to the Prince of Believers, Ali bin Abi Taleb, to tailor a Quran different from what was previously known; the differences ranging from sequence to making additions."

"It was believed that the Quran of Abdullah bin Masoud was not precisely the original Quran."

"The contemporary version does not contain exactly what was included in the Quran of Obi bin Ka'ab and Uthman Ibn Affan dropped some words and verses."

## Differences Between the Qurans

### Plurality of the masahif

"Masahif" is the plural form of "mushaf," which refers to collected writings in a volume. In Al-Sajistani's book, Al-Masahif, an entire chapter is dedicated to the differences in the quranic texts of Mohammad's companions.[462] Al-Sajistani mentions twenty-six different masahif. These





masahif were not copies of one mushaf, but different versions, as evident in what Al-Sajistani describes: "That Abdullah Ibn Masood who memorized from the messenger seventy suras said: 'There are more than 1,700 variations or difference among these masahif'."[463]

The Lexicon of Quranic Readings says, "A large number of the masahif were written prior to and until Uthman Ibn Affan's Age, who had ordered the burning of all the masahif that were contrary to his own official mushaf, such as Mushaf Ali Ibn Abi Taleb, Mushaf Ibn Masood, and Mushaf Ubay Ibn Abi Ka'ab."[464]

In relation to the multiple and various masahif, Mujaz Da'erat Al-Ma'aref Al-Islamiyah says, "The quranic text that Uthman Ibn Affan adopted was merely one text among many other texts that were found during the first four centuries of Hijra...There were other masahif associated with a number of Mohammad's Companions and it was said that they flourished in Kufa, Al-Basra [cities in Iraq] and Al-Sham [Syria]."[465] Da'erat Al-Ma'aref Al-Islamiyah continues, "In addition to these three masahif that were written by Abdullah Ibn Masood, Ubay Ibn Abi Ka'ab, and Abu Moussa Abdullah Al-Ash'aari, there were other masahif attributed to twelve of Mohammad's Companions."[466]

In addition, there are the quranic verses written during Mohammad's time on parchments, leather pieces and bones: Mushaf Abu Bakr Al-Siddique (which Yazeed Ibn Thabit compiled for him), Masahif Uthman Ibn Affan (Al-Mushaf Al-Imam) and Mushaf Al-Hajjaj Ibn Yousef Al-Thaqafi (in Iraq).

The total number of masahif that are different from each other are thirty-one.

### Variations of the masahif

*References to the differences of the masahif*

*Mujaz Da'erat Al-Ma'aref Al-Islamiyah* states, "Multiple sources discussed the different texts and the differences between the masahif. Ibn Al-Nadeem numbered eleven works in this field; which deal with the differences of the masahif."[467] Three examples are

- The Differences of Masahif Al-Sham [Syria], Al-Hijaz and Iraq by Ibn 'Amer Al-Yahsobu, who died in 118 AH/AD 736.

- The Differences between Massahif al-Medina, Al-Koufa and Al-Basra by AlKasa'i, who died in 189 AH/AD 805.
- The Differences between Mushaf Al-Koufa and Al-Basra and Al-Sham Fil Masahif by Abi Zakaria Al-Farra'a, who died 207 AH/AD 822.

*Examples of differences in the masahif*

*Da'erat Al-Ma'arif Al-Islamiyah* states, "*Kitab Al-Mujaz* that was written by Ibn Abi Dawood the famous speaker includes about a thousand differences (anywhere between three to nine according to *Qamous Al-mo'jam Al-Waseet*, volume 1, page 60) whose author referenced over thirty different sources[468] [and] "[t]here are other variations in readings attributed to a number of second-generation Muslims such as Al-Aswad Ibn Yazeed, 'Alqama, and Hattan...and others."[469] It also states, "More differences were attributed to other secondary copies of the masahif (the Quran) and there were more differences than the ones attributed to the original masahif."[470]

According to *Da'erat Al-Ma'arif Al-Islamiyah*, "Most of what the sources state are due to the different variations of other sources...such as *Mushaf Ibn Mas'oud* which was widely used in Kufa; *Mushaf Ubay* which was widely used in Al-Sham and *Mushaf Abi Moussa* that was widely used in Basra."[471]

These texts or masahif started during the time of the prophet Abdullah Ibn Masood, who died in 33 AH/AD 653.

> Masood "was one of Mohammad's companions, and he accompanied the prophet when he travelled and when he was in town. He was one of the first to interpret the Quran and it is said he learned directly from the prophet seventy suras. He was among the first to embrace Islam, one of the ten who spoke about paradise, and he was an imam in fiqh [Islamic jurisprudence] and hadith. Abdullah Ibn Masood refused to turn in his copy [the compilation of the Quran] when Uthman Ibn Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, ordered that his mushaf should be destroyed.
>
> "Ubay Ibn Ka'ab, died in the year of 18 AH/AD 639, and had offered his allegiance to the prophet of Allah, and witnessed the Battle of Badr and all the other raids...and he was one of the scribes of the





> revelation [of Mohammad], and was one of the scholars among the Companions of Mohammad...and was a contemporary to the prophet...and he participated in the collection of the Quran during the time of the prophet...Often, *Mushaf Ubay* would be referred to rather than *Mushaf Hafsa.*
>
> "Abu Moussa Abdullah Al-Ash'ari, died in the year of 42 AH/AD 662, and was originally from Yemen...and his mushaf was approved in Basra...A delegate of Uthman Ibn Affan carried with him an approved copy of the Quran, he [Abu Moussa] instructed his followers not to omit anything from his mushaf [i.e. *Mushaf Abu Moussa*] even if they could not locate it in the Mushaf of Uthman. But if they found additional verses in *Mushaf Uthman* that were not found in his [*Mushaf Abi Moussa*], they can add them. This is the reason *Mushaf Abi Moussa Al-Ash'ari* was huge because it contained the two additional suras from *Mushaf Ubay*, in addition to other verses that were not found in other masahif."[472]

**Differences in quranic texts**

According to *Da'erat Al-Ma'arif Al-Islamiyah*, "It is better to talk about the quranic text known as Quran of Uthman. However, there have been many variations in the copy of Uthman [variations in word structure, and in spelling]."[473] "There are a number of spelling differences [variations] in Masahif of Uthman, in Medina, Damascus, Al-Basra, Al-Koufa, and Mecca as stated in (Kitab Al-Muqnna' by Abi 'Amr Al-Dani, and other books)."[474]

*Da'erat Al-Ma'arif Al-Islamiyah* provides the following examples of the differences:[475]

| M | Quranic Verse | Damascus copy | Al-Kufa copy | Ottoman Copy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sura Ali-Imran 3:184 | *Bizzuburi Wa-Bil' Kitab* | ------ | *Al-Zuburi Wal-Kitab* [without B] which changes the meaning |
| 2 | Sura Ghafir 40:21 | *Minkum* [among you] | ------ | *Minhum* [among them] |
| 3 | Sura YaSin 36:35 | ------ | *'Amilat* | *'Amilat'h* [adding h] |
| 4 | Sura Ghafir 40:26 | ------ | *Aw Ann* [or that] | *Wa 'Ann* [and that] omitting or & adding and |

*Explaining the differences*

*Da'erat Al-Ma'arif Al-Islamiyah* expounds on possible reasons for the differences.

> "The reason might be the inaccuracy of the scribes."[476] If this is the reason, I question the validity and value of the quranic verse that assures, "It is we who sent down the Quran and we will be its guardian."
>
> "The Arabic letters of the alphabet used in writing the first quranic texts during that time were simplistic and had not evolved as we know them today, which led to the differences in the text and the meanings associated with the text."[477]
>
> "During the first century of Hijra, the written Arabic language had an undeveloped and incomplete alphabet. At that time one letter was used to represent two different sounds. For example, the letter "d" could be pronounced "d" or "z"; and "h" could be pronounced "h", "ch" or "j", and the letter "r" could be pronounced as "r" or "z"; and "b" could be pronounced as "b", "t", "th", or "i". During that time there were no diacritical points or vowel signs that distinguished the letters that look alike. It was up to the readers to identify these letters based on the context."[478]





It is worthy to note that early quranic Arabic lacked precision because it was made up of simple lines and strokes, so it was difficult to distinguish between consonants and vowels, thus opening the door to endless possibilities in the meaning of verses and countless errors in the transcripts. Today, Arabic letters have dots; some have one, some two and some three; some above the letter and some under the letter; and one misplaced dot can change the entire letter and therefore the entire meaning.

*Emerging problems with the text*

*Da'erat Al-Ma'arif Al-Islamiyah* identifies problems that soon began to appear with the text.

- "Even in a situation where there was a resolution to the pronunciation of silent letters, another problem remained, there was a confusion as to whether some verbs should be in the active form or passive form."[479]
- "Some nouns could be read with different case endings (slight change or accents)."[480]
- "Some words had a similar form for the nouns and verbs, so it was hard to identify which one was the right one."[481]
- "Incomplete letters, the ones without dots, created differences and many such examples were provided."[482]
- "In some cases the differences were at the end of the word (grammatical error)."[483]

These differences had significant impact on the meaning. *Da'erat Al-Ma'arif Al-Islamiyah* admits, "In most cases the meaning was affected."[484] Al-Sajistani mentions countless examples of discrepancies in *Al -Masahif* (in 'Ikhtilaf Masahif Al-Amsar' in a copy of *Mushaf Uthman*, and in *Ikhtilaf Masahif Al-Sahabah*)."[485]

*Increasingly problematic differences and errors*

According to *Da'erat Al-Ma'arif Al-Islamiyah*, during the Umayyad Age (41-132 AH/AD 661-750), "The differences in *Mushaf Uthman* had gradually increased. A new text appeared that paired *Mushaf Uthman* with the *Mushaf Ibn Masood* and *Mushaf Ubay*."[486] In the Abbasid Age, "There were such differences in the readings that it became impossible to distinguish

between the accepted readings of *Mushaf Uthman* and other readings [i.e. those versions that lacked precision]".[487]

"However, using the clear Arabic dotted and lexical semicolon letters, consonantal form, posed a need for further clarifications to these readings."[488] "But do not count on new regulations because of the contradictions they contain and their incongruency with the verses that contemporary Arabic language provides."[489] In the 4th century, "the variations in the texts became clear...And this led to sharp disputes to decide which texts were the correct ones."[490]

Al-Hajjaj Ibn Yousef Al-Thaqafi was a ruler of Iraq during the Umayyad period (74 -95 AH/AD 693 – 714). Abi Dawood Al-Sajistani writes in *Al-Masahif*, "Al-Hajjaj Ibn Yousef made eleven changes in *Mushaf Uthman*"[491] and then described the changes in detail.

*Comments*

There are many other variations in the quranic text that create more differences; however it is hard to translate this section since all the examples are based on mastering the Arabic language that is the primary language of the Quran. It is impossible to divorce Arabic and the Quran, and there are limits to what a translation can do. I will not venture into the territory of explaining the playing on Arabic words, letters, meanings and so on.

However, what *Da'erat Al-Ma'arif Al-Islamiyah* presents concerning all the variations and differences in the Quran raises some questions that must be considered. In this jungle of confusion, we wonder which of these masahif is the right Quran that Mohammad recited? Where is Mohammad's Quran that was originally written on leather, wood, bones, stones, parchment or textile as documented in *Al-Mawsu'a Al-Arabiya Al-Moyassara*?[492]

When it was promised, "We will be its guardian," to which mushaf did the promise refer – *Mushaf Uthman* or the masahif that Uthman burned? Is the *Mushaf of Ibn Masood* included? Or is it the *Mushaf of Ubay Ibn Ka'ab*? Or is it *Mushaf Al-Hajjaj Ibn Yousef Al-Thaqafi*?

Let's compare all these differences with Sura An-Nisa 4:82, "If it had been from [any] other than Allah, they would have found within it much





differences." It has been proven that the quranic text has many differences. By the Quran's own evidence, it is not from God.

## Uthman Burns Six Qurans

*Perfection of Quranic Science* tells us, "Uthman saw a strife arising between Muslims because of the differences between the so-called seven 'ahruf' [languages of the Quran]. He gathered the different Qurans, and the result was seven different versions of the Quran. When Uthman saw that there were seven different Qurans, he burned six and kept one."[493] So he commanded that a new compilation be done in the year 25 AH/AD 645.

Why do Muslims tolerate the removal of parts of the Quran by Uthman? How can Uthman omit words that were written on the "Preserved Tablet" as they claim? How can he eliminate six versions of the revealed Quran, arguing that they are no longer necessary?

## The Manuscripts of the Quran

Dr. I'yad Al-Sam'Rae says, "The estimated number of quranic manuscripts in public libraries around the world are in the thousands."[494] Following is a brief description of three of them.

### The Samarkand manuscript

The Samarkand manuscript is displayed today in Topkapi Museum in Istanbul, Turkey.[495] It dates back to the year 32 AH/AD 654. This copy is not dotted with diacritical dots above or below the letters, so the letter "b" is like "t" or "y;" and there are no accents on words, no diacritical marks to indicate the desired pronunciation and no signs of emphasis.

There are about 750 differences between this manuscript and the contemporary Quran. For example, the Samarkand manuscript says, "They say; 'this is from Allah and they speak a lie against Allah' " (Sura Ali-Imran 3:78). But the same verse in the Quran that exists today reads as follows: "They say; 'this is from Allah,' but it is not from Allah; and they speak a lie against Allah." Why is the phrase "but it is not from Allah" added? Was this phrase written on the "Preserved Tablet"?

### The British Museum manuscript

Another manuscript of *Mushaf Uthman* is displayed in the British Museum in London.[496] It dates back to the year 150 AH/AD 767 and is without diacritical marks and without dots.

### The Sana'a manuscript

The manuscript of Sana'a in Yemen is the latest discovery, dating back to the 1st century of Hijra. It is kept in Maktabat Al-Jami' Al-Kabir (The Great Mosque) that was established in Sana'a in the sixth year of Hijra during the life of Mohammad.[497]

These ancient documents are not accessible to researchers. I wonder, why are these manuscripts hidden and not made available to researchers?

## The Quran and the "Preserved Tablet"

Sura Al-Burooj 85:21-22 states, "But this is an honored Quran in a Preserved Tablet." The "Preserved Tablet" is believed to be the perfect words of a perfect God to his creation, which exists in heaven but was brought down to earth through revelation to Mohammad. Perhaps Mohammad got the idea from Moses' tablets, the Sumerian tablet[498] or the Al-Izidiyya tablets.[499]

The problem is that Muslims believe the Quran is found word for word on the Preserved Tablet. But when we find significant differences between the texts of different Qurans, we must ask which version is the one on the "Preserved Tablet"?

## Errors and Irregularities of the Quran

### Grammatical errors

The original language of the Quran is the Arabic language. Sura Ash-Shu'ara' 26:195 says, "In a clear Arabic tongue" which means genuine Arabic Language. Nevertheless, there are more than 275 grammatical errors in the Quran. How can all these linguistic, grammatical and spelling errors be found in the Quran? Can Allah who inspired the Quran make mistakes?





Aisha, the wife of the prophet said when she was asked about these errors, 'This is the work of the scribes, they made mistakes in writing the Quran."[500] However, I wonder how scholars can reconcile these mistakes to this assertion in Sura Al-Hijr 15:9, "We descended the Reminder, and that We are for it protector."

Does not this mean that the Quran is not the true revelation of God?

### Historical errors

The book *Is the Quran Infallible?* cites many errors in the Quran including historical errors.[501] Below are two examples:

The Quran indicates that Haman was a minister of Pharaoh. Sura Al-Qasas 28 verses 8 and 38 say, "Pharaoh and Haman and their soldiers were sinners." Meanwhile, the Bible says Haman was the minister of King Ahasuerus. "After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him and set his seat above all the princes who were with him" (Esther 3:1). There are no fewer than a thousand years between the time of Pharaoh and that of Haman.

The Quran confuses Maryam, sister of Moses and Aaron, with Virgin Mary. "And [the example of] Mary, the daughter of Imran, who guarded her chastity, so We blew into [her garment] through Our angel, and she believed in the words of her Lord and His scriptures and was of the devoutly obedient" (Sura At-Tahrim 66:12). The Virgin Mary is the daughter of Jehoiakim (same as Eliakim).[502] There are 1,600 years between Virgin Mary and the time of Moses and Maryam.

There are dozens of historical errors like these in the Quran, which indicates that the Quran is not from God, as Almighty God makes no mistakes.

### Geographical errors of the Quran

There are also many geographical errors in which fact gives way to fantasy. Here are some examples.

It is written in the Quran both that the sun sets in a muddy well, and that it sets beneath Allah's throne.

> "...And they ask you concerning Zil'-Qarnein [the two-horned king]; say; I will recite to you an account of him. Surely, we established him

upon the earth and granted him means of access to everything. So he followed up another way. Until, when he reached the setting of the sun, he found it setting in a spring of dark mud, and he found near it a people." (Sura Al-Kahf 18:83-86)

Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah says, "The prophet said in Hadith Abi Zur, when the sun sets, it goes and prostrates itself beneath the throne."[503]

According to the Quran, God made the stars for the purpose of stoning demons.

"...We have adorned the lowest heavens with stars and made them to stone the devils [demons] and have prepared for them the torment [punishment] of the blazing fire." (Sura Al-Mulk 67:5)

**Scientific errors of the Quran**

The Quran contains many scientific errors too. The creation of man is one example.

"And we created man of an extraction of clay. Then we made him as a Nutfah [a drop of male sperm] and placed him in a safe lodging [woman's womb; Uterus]. Then we created the Nutfah into Alaqa [a clinging clot] (a lump or a piece of thick coagulated blood), and then we created the Alaqa into a Mudghah [lump of flesh; or chewed substance], then we made from the Mudghah, bones, then we covered the bones with flesh." (Sura Al-Mumenoon 23:12-14)

Embryogenesis scientists raise an interesting question: " 'Which is first, the bones or the flesh,' referring to the verse 'And we covered the bones with flesh.' No human or animal embryo is only formed from bones that are not covered with flesh."[504] Has it ever been recorded in the history of mankind that a woman aborted a skeleton without flesh?

**Foreign words in the Quran**

The Quran was originally recited "in a clear Arabic tongue" (Sura Ash-Shuara 26:195), which means genuine Arabic language. But *The Encyclopedia of Islamic Knowledge*, in an independent study (for Mutakali), provides a classification of a large number of words in the Quran that are





borrowed from Ethiopian, Persian, Greek, Hindi, Assyrian, Hebrew, Nabataean, Coptic, Turkish, African tribal languages and Berber."[505]

## Abrogation in the Quran

One of the meanings of abrogation is to cancel.[506] Abrogation in the Quran is the canceling of verses. Ibn Katheer narrates, "So that what is lawful may be unlawful, and what is unlawful may be lawful; what is permitted may be prohibited and what is prohibited may be permitted."[507] Sura Al-Baqarah 2:106 justifies abrogation saying, "We do not abrogate a verse or cause it to be forgotten except that we bring forth a better one or similar to it."

The Medinan Quran (revelations received after Mohammad's migration to Medina from Mecca in AD 622) abrogates the Meccan Quran (revelations received before his migration). The Medinan Quran contains a verse known as the Verse of the Sword, Sura At-Taubah 9:5: "When the Sacred Months have passed, kill the polytheists wherever you find them. And capture them, and besiege them, and lie in wait for them at every ambush." That single verse was enough to abrogate 124 peaceful verses of Meccan Quran.

For more in-depth information on abrogation, check out *The Encyclopedia of Christian Islamic Debate*.[508]

## Sources of the Quran

The evidence provided proves the Quran is not a revelation from God, but manufactured by humans. Prophet Mohammad collected its material from various sources, including old myths, heritage and traditions; so-called Christian heresies; poetry, Hanafy and Sabean references from the Age of Ignorance; Persian and Indian stories; and pagan practices such as pilgrimage and Kaaba, the black rock and the crescent moon. The Quran itself refers to this fact, saying,

"And those who disbelieve say, 'This [Quran] is not except a falsehood he invented, and another people assisted him in it.' But they have committed an injustice and a lie. And they say, 'Legends of the

> former peoples which he has written down, and they are dictated to him morning and afternoon.' Say, [O Mohammad], 'It has been revealed by He who knows [every] secret within the heavens and the earth. Indeed, He is ever Forgiving and Merciful'." (Sura Al-Furqan 25:4-6)

There are many other similar examples in the Quran, and I recommend that the reader refer to *The Encyclopedia of Christian Islamic Debate* for further research.[509]

***

Given the many disparate versions of the Quran, its history of alteration and loss and its questionable source material, it would seem wise to disbelieve the Quran. I pray Muslims would abide instead in Jesus' word in the Holy Bible, and they will "know the truth, and the truth will set [them] free" (John 8:31-32).





# Chapter 9: IS THE PROPHETIC HADITH BEFITTING A PROPHET FROM GOD?

In the *Introduction to the Origin of Hadith*, the author defines the hadiths as "the prophet's sayings, and reports of his deeds. When someone narrated a hadith in the presence of Mohammad, and he did not deny or renounce it but remained silent or repeated it, it became a confirmed hadith. The Companions of the Prophet recorded his words, actions, and deeds."[510]

## Contradictions of the Hadiths

The contradictions of the hadiths arose because of the changes that occurred to them and from abrogation.

### Changes to the hadiths

*The Encyclopedia of Islamic Knowledge* admits that the collected sayings of the prophet of Islam have been significantly altered.

> "After the death of Mohammad, the original religious views and practices that prevailed in the first generation were somewhat changed. Then with the arrival of the Modern Age, scholars and theologians started modernizing the beliefs and adapting them to the contemporary ways of life. After the great conquest, Islam became more powerful and extended its sovereignty over vast areas and borrowed new opinions and systems from conquered peoples. This quickly led to the invention of the Hadith, so some invented new parts of Hadith and attributed them to the prophet to appeal to the younger generations. Much of the Hadith was circulated by people connected to the prophet."[511]

### Abrogation in the hadiths

Many modern theologians agree that abrogation (cancelling) takes place in the prophetic hadiths. Among them are Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, Abu Dawood Al-Sajistani, Ahmad bin Is'haq, Abu Muslim Al Asfahani, Al Ja'ed al Shibani, Ibn Shahin al Baghdadi and Jamal Al Din al Jooziy.

The University of Rabat in Morocco awarded Dr. Karima Bint Ali a doctorate for her studies and achievements regarding her book *Abrogation in the Hadith and its Abrogating by Ibn Shaheen Al-Baghdadi*. It contains many examples of abrogation in the hadiths. One example Dr. Karima mentions[512] concerns the hadith about Mohammad going to the demons:

> "Abdullah bin Massoud narrated that the prophet of Allah set off walking and said: 'Don't leave until I come back to you' and he was not to be found until dawn. I said: 'Oh prophet of Allah, where were you?' He said: 'I was sent to the demons.' I said to him: 'Oh prophet of Allah, what is this voice that I hear from above?' And he said: 'The farewells of those with whom I met'."[513]
>
> This hadith is contradicted by *Sahih al Bukhari*: "Exegesis of Sura Al-Jinn 72: Narrated by Ibn Abbas: 'The prophet of Allah did not recite to the demons and did not see them'."[514]

## The Hadiths and Terrorism

### Killing and assassinations

In addition to what the Quran says about killing and assassinations, the prophetic hadiths are full of what Mohammad said about terror and terrorism. Here are some examples from *Sahih al Bukhari*:

> "Bring them in chains round their necks until they enter Islam."[515]
>
> "Ibn Omar said that the Messenger of Allah said, 'I was ordered to fight people until they testify that there is no God but Allah and that Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah'."[516]

### Wars and battles

There are narratives in *Sahih al-Bukhari* about battles with Jewish tribes.





> "Ibn Omar said that Mohammad fought al-Nadir and killed them. He fought Qureiza, killing their men and dividing their wives, children and money among Muslims. 'And I evacuated all the Jews from Medina, killed the Jewish community of Bani Qureiza and slew more than 900 Jews'."[517]

*The Prophetic Biography* by Ibn Hisham documents Mohammad's wars and battles.

> "Mohammad Ibn Ishaq al-Mutlabi confirmed that the Messenger of Allah's invasions were twenty-seven battles."[518]
>
> "Other invasions and Sarayah were thirty-eight."[519]

By adding the number of invasions, incursions and battles that Mohammad engaged in, we find that they are 27+38=65 killing expeditions and wars during the period of ten years of his residence in Medina until his death. This means that he averaged six battles a year, or one every two months, for ten years non-stop!

### Spoils and looting

Mohammad motivated his followers to join his army and to declare wars by promising they would take spoils upon victory.

> Sura Al-Fath 48:20: "Allah has promised you much booty that you will take."
>
> Sura Al-Anfal 8:69: "All the spoils you took are permissible and good."
>
> *Sahih Al Bukhari*: "The messenger of Allah said: 'I gave five and none had given before me: I was made victorious by terror more than all who were before me and the spoils made permissible to me were not allowed to any before me'."[520]

## The Hadiths and Sex

Muslims believe that Allah inspired the prophetic hadiths. I wonder how inspiration from the Holy God could include so many scandalous revelations as those given to the prophet of Islam.

### Mohammad annulled adoption and married his son's wife

Mohammad had an adopted son called Zaid bin Haritha. Mohammad lusted for his daughter-in-law Zaynab bint Jahsh, wife of Zaid bin Haritha. He divorced her from her husband and married her.[521] For fear of criticism that he married his daughter–in-law, he annulled adoption in Islam.[522]

### Breastfiding adults

A woman named Sahla was married to a man named Abu Hudhifa, and she had an adopted son named Salim. But after Mohammad abolished adoption Abu Hudhifa became uncomfortable with Salim in his home.[523] The prophet advised Sahla to breastfid Salim so that he would become permissible to her, and whatever discomforts Abu Hudhifa might have would dissolve. She listened to the advice of the prophet although Salim was an adult, a married man. [524] Based on this situation, Aisha Mohammad's wife used to tell her nieces to breastfid whomever they wanted to see in their homes.[525]

### Sex with a dead woman

The book *Kanz Al 'Ommal Lil-Muttaqi Al Hindi* narrates that "the prophet of Allah took off his gown and put it on Om Ali and slept with her in her grave and they kicked on him dirt saying: 'Oh messenger of Allah we saw you do something that no one else has ever done'. He said: 'I dressed her in my gown, so she can wear the gowns of paradise and I slept with her in her grave to relieve her of the torments of the grave'."[526]

According to *Howashi al Sharwani*, "There is no need to rewash a dead woman if her husband has sex with her after she dies…And there is no punishment for anyone who has sex with a dead woman or limits sex to sex with a dead woman."[527]

### Sex with animals

In *Al Iqna' fi Hal al Faz*, Abi Shoja'a writes, "There is no restriction against sex with a dead woman or animal."[528] And *Kitab al Mahalli* agrees, "There is no restriction against sex with animals."[529]





## The Hadiths and Prophetic Medicine

Mohammad gave unusual advice on methods for healing and protection. Below is a list of some of those methods.

> *Healing through camel urine*: Ashieb Al Baghdadi says, "The messenger of Allah said that the milk and urine of camels have healing power for stomach problems."[530]
>
> *Healing through the prophet's urine*: *Al Mu'jam al Kabeer*: "The prophet was urinating in a pot then raising it from under his bed he saw there was nothing in it. So he said to a woman called Baraka, 'Where is the urine that was in the pot?' She said, 'I drank it.' He said, 'You were saved from the fire by that'."[531]
>
> *Healing through the wings of flies*: *Sahih al Bukhari*: "Abi Huraira quoted the prophet of Allah who said: 'If a fly falls in a vessel, don't throw it out for in one of its wings is illness but in the other is healing'."[532]
>
> *Healing through date fruit*: *Sahih Muslim*: "The prophet of Allah said: 'Whoever eats seven dates in the morning will be immune that day against poison or witchcraft'."[533]
>
> *Healing through honey*: *Sahih al Bukhari*: "A man came to the prophet and said: 'My brother has a stomach ailment.' So Mohammad said: 'Give him honey,' So he gave him honey and said: 'I gave him the honey and he does not 'any better,' So Mohammad said to him, 'Believe Allah and not your brother's stomach'."[534]

## The Hadiths and the Torments of the Grave

Mohammad told fanciful stories about some of the torments of the grave. Al Askalani relates the following story about the judgments of the two angels and their plagues in his book, *Fat'h al Bari Shar'h Sahih al Bukhari.*

> "The spirit of the infidel will return to his body and two angels will come to him and ask: 'Who is your Lord?' He will respond 'Ha, ha, ha, I don't know,' and they will say to him: 'What is your religion?' He will then respond, 'Ha, ha, ha, I don't know.' Then they will say: 'Who is this man that was sent to you?' And he will respond: 'Ha, ha, I don't

know'. Then a voice will call from heaven accusing him of lying; and the grave will become tight around him until his ribs are broken...Then there will come an angel with a hammer of steel that can turn a mountain into dust and strike him. The blow will be heard from the east to the West, and he will become dust."[535]

In *Al Durr al Manthour*, we are told of another torment, the "bald serpent." The prophet of Allah said,

> "Allah brought out to the dead a serpent from hell called Shuja'...that will spin around them. It pecks on the head until it breaks open the skull and reaches for the brain and terrifies the dead in his grave."[536]

## The Hadith about the End of Islam

*Sahih Muslim* relates the prophet's comments on the strangeness of Islam and its future disappearance: "The prophet of Allah said: 'Islam began strange and will return strange and will vanish between the two mosques [Mecca and Medina] as a serpent vanishes under a stone'."[537]

***

Islam directs Muslims to emulate the life and example of Mohammad as a prophet of God. However, the record of his life and example in the prophetic hadiths brings into question whether he is a true prophet and reveals that his example is not worthy.





# Chapter 10: IS JIBRIL AN ANGEL FROM GOD?

## The Revelation of Jibril to Mohammad

### Mohammad admitted he followed a demon

We read in *Sahih Al Bukhari*:

> "Aisha said that the angel came to Mohammad when he was in the Cave of Har'a and he said: 'Read.' So the prophet said: 'I am unable to read.' Mohammad went on '...then he took me and choked me till I lost my energy. Then he let go of me.' This was repeated three times. So he returned shaking internally and entered the house saying to Khadijah: 'cover me, cover me.' So they covered him until the spirit left him. He said to Khadijah: 'Oh Khadijah what is wrong with me? I am so worried [I fear for myself]'."[538]

To understand his expression "I fear for myself" let us refer to *The Aleppo Biography* where it is recorded that the messenger of Allah said to Khadijah: "I am afraid that the one that called me is a demon...And I am afraid that I am possessed, meaning touched by a demon."[539] *Sirah al Halabiyeh* says, "Narrated by Omar bin Sharhabeel that the prophet of Allah said to Khadijah: 'I am afraid that the one who called me is a demon'."[540]

Dr. Al Bouti writes in his famous book, *Jurisprudence of the Biographies*,

> "Mohammad was afraid that it was a demon that appeared to him in the cave and could not believe it was an angel because the apparition caused him to be terrified, tremble and turn pale. He used to tell Khadijah, 'I fear for myself because of the demons'."[541]

This is Mohammad's own testimony that what he saw in the cave of Har'a was a demon and that he was possessed by a devil.

### Mohammad said he saw Satan

Ibn al Juzi says, "Mohammad feared that he saw Satan."[542] Zeyn Al Din bin Al Hussein also records, "Mohammad feared that what he saw was of Satan."[543]

Ibn Katheer says, "When Khadijah asked Waraqa bin Nofal about what happened to Mohammad, he said: 'I am concerned about the creature that appeared to Mohammad, for some demons assume the appearance of Jibril to deceive human beings and corrupt them, and worse possess them'."[544] This was the general opinion at Mohammad's time according to *Al Lubab*, which says, "They used to say, 'Satan pretended to be an angel and deceived him,' and they said: 'He is deceived. It is no other than Satan'."[545]

Is there a stronger testimony than this to prove that what he saw was Satan and not an angel?

### Evidence concerning the spirit's identity

So, what caused Mohammad to change his opinion and declare that what appeared to him was not Satan but an angel? The following sources clarify the secret of this change.

According to "Imtihan Khadijah Borhan Al Wahy" in *The Prophetic Biography*, Khadijah conducted a test to reveal the identity of the Spirit.

> "Ibn Is'Haq said: "Khadijah said to the messenger of Allah: 'Cousin, can you tell me about your friend whom you say visits you sometimes?' He said: 'I will'. Just then, Jibril appeared to him and he cried out: 'Oh Khadijah Jibril came.' She said: 'Get up cousin and sit on my left thigh'. The messenger of Allah rose and sat on her left thigh and she said: 'Do you see him?' He said, 'I do.' She said, 'move to my right thigh'. Then the messenger of Allah turned and sat on her right thigh. Then she said: 'Do you still see him?' He said, 'Yes.' She said, 'come sit on my lap.' So the messenger of Allah sat on her lap. She asked, 'Do you see him?' He said 'Yes.' So she uncovered herself and cast away her veil while the messenger of Allah, peace and prayers be upon him, was seated on her lap and she said: 'Do you see him?' He said: 'No.' She said, 'Oh cousin I attest to you that he is an angel and not Satan'."





> Ibn Is'Haq quotes Abdullah bin Hassan: "My mother Fatima said that Khadijah brought the messenger of Allah between her and her nightgown, and at this Jibril departed. She said to the messenger; 'I swear by Allah this is an angel and this is not a demon'."[546]
>
> *Tareekh Al Tabari*: "Narrated by Ismael bin Abi Haqim Mullah Al Zubair about Khadijah that she said to the messenger of Allah what proved that Allah had honored him with his prophethood and narrated the same tale of asking Mohammad to sit on her lap and she gave her final opinion 'Oh my cousin I swear by Allah that this is an angel and not a devil'."[547]
>
> *A'alam al Nobowa* repeats the story with all the details. Khadijah arrived at the same conclusion, saying, "Oh Cousin I swear to Allah that this is an angel and not Satan."[548]
>
> Fat'h al Bari narrates all the details of the same story and Khadijah said the same thing at the end, "This is proof, I swear by Allah this is an angel and not Satan."[549]
>
> *Siret Halabiyeh* confirms the same narrative: "He used to stand in Mecca before the Quran came down upon him when the spirit used to come down to him in spells of fainting and so on and because of Khadijah removed the covering of her head, the apparition disappeared and would not return unless she covered her head and thus she knew for sure that the one who appeared to Mohammad is an angel and not a devil because an angel would not look at an uncovered head of a woman but a demon would."[550]

### Comments on Khadijah's testimony

Although Mohammad believed the testimony of his first wife Khadijah, there is a lot to consider.

*His own confession:* Mohammad admitted that he saw Satan or that a demon touched him.

*The method used to identify the "angel" is ridiculous:* Khadijah proved this creature was an angel because he was ashamed to see her face. Wasn't the angel who was ashamed to see her face ashamed to see the lower part of her body? Which is more shameful to look upon?

*Khadijah's testimony is invalid:* She is a witness who did not see anything to testify for or about.

*Khadijah's testimony is not acceptable in Islam:* According to Islam, her testimony is not valid because a woman is deficient of intellect and religion.[551]

*Khadijah's testimony is illegal in Islam:* Khadijah, having sole testimony, is contradicting the laws of the Quran, which rules that testimony is not accepted unless it comes from two men or a man and two women. "And bring to witness two witnesses from among your men. And if you don't have two male witnesses, then a man and two women from those whom you accept as witnesses – so that if one of the women errs, then the other can remind her." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:282)

Is it up to Khadijah to validate to Mohammad his prophethood? Who is teaching whom? Is Khadijah the one to decide about the identity of the spirit that appears to Mohammad? She did not even see the spirit. It should be Mohammad informing Khadijah about the spirit that came to him.

Actually, Mohammad admitted that the one who came to him was Satan.

## Phenomena Associated with Jibril's Appearance

I have previously discussed in Chapter 7 the weird and unusual phenomena that accompanied every appearance of Jibril, providing evidence that he was not an angel but rather a demon. I sum up some of this evidence to stress the reality of this demonic creature.

### Phenomena that indicate Jibril was Satan

*Jibril would choke Mohammad*

*Sahih Al Bukhari*: "In the Cave of Har'a, the angel came and said, 'Read.' He answered, 'I can't read.' So Jibril choked me until all my strength was gone and he released me and said [again] 'Read.' I said: 'I can't read,' so he choked me a second time until no strength was left in me and then released me and said: 'Read,' and I said: 'I can't read,' and he choked me a third time and then released me'."[552]





Al Bukhari also says, "Aisha narrated that an angel came when Mohammad was in the Cave Har'a and said 'Read,' and the messenger of Allah said, 'I can't read,' and he said, the angel choked him until all his strength was gone and then released him. [This was repeated three times.]"[553]

Al Wakidi narrates the same story of how the angel came and said to him, "Read," and he said, "I cannot read." So the angel grabbed him and choked him until all his strength was gone and then released him.[554]

Al Nisabori says in his *Sahih* (Authentic Hadith), "And the truth came when he was in the Cave of Har'a and the angel came to him and said: 'Read,' He said: 'I cannot read.' And he [Mohammad] said: So he grabbed me and choked me until all my strength dissolved and then released me and he said 'Read,' I said, 'I can't read.' He took me and choked me a second time until all my strength was gone from me and he released me and said, 'Read,' and I said, 'I am unable to read,' so he got a hold of me and choked me a third time until all the strength was gone from me."[555]

In all the heavenly books there is no report of an angel choking Moses or Isaiah or Jeremiah or any of the prophets. This is proof that the one who appeared to Mohammad was not an angel but Satan, the murderer of people and the father of lies from the beginning (John 8:44).

*Jibril would terrify Mohammad*

*The Aleppo Biography* reports, "Ibn Is'Haq said that when the Quran came down to Mohammad, he suffered what he had suffered before. Prior to the descent of the Quran on him, Mohammad had occasions like fainting or swooning accompanied by trembling, blinking of the eyes and his face would turn red and he would groan like a camel. So Khadijah said to him: 'I will direct you to the one who can help you'."[556]

Ibn Al Atheer says, "When the spirit came to Mohammad, his face would turn red and he would groan like a cow or a camel and his forehead would break out in sweat even on a very cold day."[557]

> Dr. Al Buti says: "Mohammad would be touched by terrifying fear and his body would be shaking and his color would change, and he would say to Khadijah: 'I am afraid for myself from the touch of demons'."[558]

These confessions are devastating. There is no angel that does this to a prophet. It is because of the terror Jibril induced in Mohammad that he admitted the one who came to him was a terrifying demon.

### Mohammad's apparition compared with the angel visiting Virgin Mary

The Holy Bible describes the peaceful appearance of angel Gabriel to Mary when she was a young virgin. He did not choke or terrify her as Satan did to Mohammad.

> "And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women! But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God'." (Luke 1:28-30)

The Quran also describes the angel who appeared to Mary as comforting and peaceful, not terrifying.

> "And mention O Mohammad, in the Book, the story of Mary, when she withdrew from her family to a place toward the east. And she took, in seclusion from them, a screen. Then We sent to her Our Angel, and he represented himself to her as a well-proportioned man. She said, 'Indeed, I seek refuge in the Most Merciful from you, [so leave me], if you should be fearing of Allah.' He said, 'I am only the messenger of your Lord to give you [news of] a pure boy.' She said, 'How can I have a boy while no man has touched me and I have not been unchaste?' He said, 'Thus [it will be]; your Lord says, 'It is easy for Me, and We will make him a sign to the people and a mercy from Us. And it is a matter [already] decreed'." (Sura Maryam 19:16-21)

The Quran does not say that the angel choked Virgin Mary or terrified her, but rather he reassured her. All this evidence proves that the creature that appeared to Mohammad was Satan.





## Satan Appears to Mohammad in the Image of Jibril

### A devil called "The White"

The Bible warns about Satan's trickery: "For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14). The scholars of Islam are also aware of his tactics:

- Al Razi: "Satan who is called 'The White' came to Mohammad in the image of Jibril to whisper to him face to face."[559]
- Al-Qurtubi: "Ibn Abbas said: 'the White Satan appeared to the prophet in the form of Jibril to whisper to him a revelation'."[560]
- Al-Qurtubi quoting Ata': "he meant by the White Devil, the one who used to come to Mohammad in the image of Jibril wanting to mesmerize him.[561]
- Muqatel: "The prophet said, 'Who is the devil who came from the land' and The White Devil said: 'I am he'. So he came and found him in the house of Safa and when he left, the White Devil arose in the image of Jibril to inspire him."[562]
- Al Halabi: "Many of the exegetes say that Mohammad had an enemy from among the devils, one who was called The White who used to come to him in the appearance of Jibril."[563]
- Al Razi: "A devil called The White came to the prophet of Allah in the image of Jibril, peace be upon him."[564]

Is there evidence stronger than this that the creature who inspired Mohammad is Satan himself?

### Satan inspired Mohammad with a verse of the Quran

I have touched on some of these points in Chapter 7 and am repeating them now for their importance in showing the reality of Jibril, as well as the reality that Mohammad couldn't distinguish between the demonic and the angelic.

Sura An-Najm 53:19-20, the so-called "satanic verses," quote Mohammad as saying, "Have you considered Al Lat, Al Uzza and Manaat the third, the other..." Al Tabari comments on these verses as follows.

"The messenger of Allah sat in the arena of the people of Quraysh and he wished that there would come to him from Allah something that would not make them renounce him."[565] "So Allah sent down to him: 'The falling stars did not lure or distract your friend.' So the prophet of Allah recited An-Najm till he got to: "Did you see Al Lat, Al Uzza and Manaat, the third the other," [Sura An-Najm 53:19-20] And Satan cast upon him these two words: "These exalted cranes, their intercession is to be desired," which he uttered."[566] Al Tabari adds, "When he left, Jibril came to him and said I have not come to you with these verses."[567]

*Tafsir Al Samarqandi* also comments on these verses.

"Ibn Abass said that Satan came in the image of Jibril and he recited Sura An-Najm and it was near the Kaaba and ended in verses 19 and 20: 'Have you considered Al Lat, Al Uzza and Manaat, the third the other one." Satan cast on his tongue: 'These exalted cranes their intercession is to be desired,' When the pagans heard him recite, they rejoiced. When he finished reciting, he bowed, and Muslims and non-Muslims bowed with him. Then when Jibril came, peace be upon him, he said, 'I did not come to you with this' and then came down the verse: 'Never did we send a messenger or a prophet before you except when they desired (for his people's acceptance of his message) that Satan cast into his desire, so Allah abrogates what Satan casts'."[568]

This proves that Satan inspired Mohammad and Mohammad could not discern between the words of Satan and those of an angel. Truth is, all came from Satan.

**Mohammad's claim about converting his demon to Islam**

The narrations below are further proof of his relationships with demons. (Mohammad's talk about how he converted his demon to Islam is also covered in Chapter 7.)

*Sahih Muslim*: "narrated by Abdullah bin Massoud: The messenger of Allah said 'There is not one of you who has not been appointed a demon who follows him.' They asked, 'You too O Messenger of Allah?' He said, 'Me too but Allah helped me to where I converted my demon to Islam and now he only encourages me to do good'."[569]





Al Razi: "The prophet said: 'There is not one of you who does not have a demon.' He was asked: 'You as well Oh Messenger of Allah?' He said, 'even me but Allah Almighty helped me against him and he became Muslim and there are many hadiths about it'." [570]

Ibn Khuzayma: "Mimouna the wife of the prophet arose to perform ablution and she stood behind him praying to Allah. So he said to her: 'Your demon moved you.' She said, 'By my mother and father O Messenger of Allah, do I have a demon?' The prophet responded: 'Yes, I swear by the one who sent me with truth, I also have a demon. But Allah helped me against him and he became Muslim'."[571]

*Sahih Muslim*: "Narrated by Arwa who said that Aisha the wife of the prophet told him that the messenger of Allah left her one night and she said that she was jealous so when he came back and saw what she was doing, he asked her: 'What's wrong with you Oh Aisha, are you jealous?' I said: 'And why wouldn't I be jealous for one like you?' And the messenger of Allah said: 'Did your devil come to you?' She said: 'Oh Prophet of Allah, do I have a devil?' He said, 'Yes.' And I asked, 'Does every person have a devil?' He said 'Yes.' I said: 'And you too Oh Messenger of Allah?' He said, 'Yes but my Lord helped me against him and he became Muslim'."[572]

## Jibril "Purifies" Mohammad

*Sahih Muslim*, narrated by Anas bin Malek: "Jibril came to the prophet of Allah when he was playing with boys, grabbed him and caused him convulsions and split open his chest and took out his heart and took out of him ('Alaqa) a black worm, saying 'This is Satan's luck from you.' And he washed it in a golden can with the water of Zamzam."[573]

*Tafsir Ibn Katheer*: "Abi Huraira narrated that the Messenger of Allah spoke of what happened when he was in the desert at the age ten. A passerby pointed towards him and asked another man: 'Is it he?' Then they grabbed him, laid me down and one of them said to his friend split his chest. One of them reached to my chest and opened it and said to the other, 'take out the malevolence and the jealousy' so he took something that looked like a leech and threw it away."[574]

*Sahih Ibn Habban*: "The chest of the prophet was split open when he was a boy playing among his peers and a leech was removed out of him and when Allah Almighty took the prophet on a Night Journey, he commanded Jibril to split open his chest another time, take out his heart, wash it and return it to its place."[575]

There are several versions to the narrative of the purification of Mohammad's heart of the black thing that is interpreted as malevolence, jealousy and sin – or else the spell of Satan. There are narratives that indicate that the purification happened to Mohammad more than once. One time it happened when he was two years old and another time when he was ten, and one more time on that special night of the Night Journey. What does this mean? Does this mean that "sin" or the "spell of Satan" has never departed from him?

## Jibril Fulfills all of Mohammad's Desires

### Jibril hurries to fulfill Mohammad's lusts

*Syrat Ibn Is'Haq*: "Narrated by Aisha; who said I was jealous and I said to a woman who gave herself to the Messenger of Allah: 'It's not worthy that a woman gives herself to the Messenger of Allah without a dowry' and the prophet had excluded some women and I expected he would get a verse and he did. 'You, [O Mohammad], may put aside whom you will of them or take to yourself whom you will. And any that you desire of those [wives] whom you had [temporarily] isolated – there is no blame upon you [in returning her].' I was disappointed, and I said: 'I see that your lord hastens to fulfill your desires'."[576]

*Tabaqat al Qubra*: "Aisha said: 'What good is it when a woman gives herself to a man?' But it would be worthy if that woman is called by Allah a believer. So when this verse came down Aisha told Mohammad, 'Allah hastens to fulfill your lusts'." [577]

*Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal* tells the same story narrated by Aisha about her jealousy and how the prophet got a favorable verse, so she said, "I see that your Lord Almighty hastens to fulfill your desires'."[578]





*Sahih al Bukhari*: "Khawla bint Hakeem was a woman who gave herself to the prophet and Aisha said: 'Isn't a woman embarrassed to give herself to a man?' Then the verse came down: 'And any that you desire of those [wives] from whom you had [temporarily] separated…' Aisha said: 'Oh Messenger of Allah: I see that your Lord hastens to fulfill your desires'."[579]

### Al kufayt (the saucepan) and its gift of superior sexual abilities

From the book *Kanz Al 'Ommal*: "The Messenger of Allah said: 'My sexual abilities were considered average until Allah brought down to me the Kufayt [saucepan] and he explained the meaning of 'kufayt;' saying: 'It is a bowl that came down from heaven and the messenger ate of its contents and was given great sexual power.' He said in the hadith: 'It made women and perfume appealing to me and I earned the saucepan and Jibril came to me with the bowl and said 'Al Kufayt' [saucepan] for you, and I ate of it and was given the sexual power of 40 men'."[580]

*El La Al'e Al Masnou'ah*: "Narrated by Abi Huraira that the messenger of Allah complained to Jibril about his ordinary sexual ability and Jibril smiled until the place sparkled from the glitter that emanated from Jibril and asked: 'Are you eating from the saucepan [kufayt] for it gives you the sexual ability of 40 men'."[581]

*Fayd Al Qadeer*: "Mohammad said: 'Jibril came to me with a saucepan and food in it and identified the food as 'Hareesa,' which is meat cooked with wheat, and Jibril said to me: 'Eat.' So I ate, and it was heavenly. Mua'z asked, 'O messenger of Allah, were you given anything from this food of heaven?' He said, 'Yes, Jibril gave me Hareesa and told me to eat and when I ate it, I gained the power of 40 men in sex'."[582]

*Omdet al Qari*: "He was given the sexual ability of 40 of the men of heaven."

Al Turmedhi says that among the distinctions given to believers in heaven is that they will be given superior sexual abilities similar to 100 of the men on earth.[583] This means that the messenger of Allah had the sexual power

of 40 X 100 men or 4000 men. Are these the qualifications of a prophet from God?

## Jibril's Fear of Dogs

*Tafsir Al Qurtubi* reports on a bizarre story about the origin of Mohammad's hatred of dogs:

> "Khawla said: She was serving the prophet, who for many days didn't have 'the spirit' come on him. He said: 'Oh Khawla, what happened in my house? Jibril hasn't been coming to me.' Khawla said: 'I cleaned and swept the house and I swept under the bed. And there was a dead dog, so I got rid of it.' Just then the beard of the prophet of Allah shook for when the spirit came to him he would tremble. Then he said: 'Oh Khawla cover me'."[584]

How did Mohammad not smell the stench of the dead dog under his bed?

> Said Al-Turmedhi confirms the narrative that a woman said, "I do not see your devil, maybe he left you."[585] Meanwhile, the devil sent down a verse that he had not left Mohammad.
>
> *Sahih Al Bukhari*: "Jibril stopped coming to the prophet so a woman of Quraysh said: 'His devil stopped coming down to him;' then these verses came upon him: 'By the morning and the night, your Lord's love for you has not decreased'."[586]
>
> *Fat'h al Qadeer*: "Jibril did not appear to the prophet and some of his cousins said, 'I see your friend [Jibril] has abandoned you.' So this verse came to him: 'By the morning and the night, your Lord's love for you has not decreased'."[587]

*Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal* says, "Jibril said to the messenger of Allah, I don't enter a house with a dog in it."[588] Maymouneh says that the reason behind Mohammad's instructions to kill dogs was Jibril. *Al Jam'eh* gives an illustration of Mohammad's zeal concerning dogs: "The prophet commanded the killing of dogs in Medina and was told of a woman who had a dog at the far side of Medina and he sent to have it killed,"[589] which is confirmed by *Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal*: "We were dispatched by the





prophet to kill dogs until we found a woman from the desert and we killed her dog."[590]

Didn't God create dogs? How can Mohammad have this attitude towards what God created? Why should a spirit need to avoid any of God's creatures?

***

The prophet of Islam received all his revelation from a spirit being he himself admitted as being of Satan – even Satan himself. Eyewitness testimony confirms Jibril was demonic, not angelic. Jibril's actions were demonic. That makes Jibril's revelation demonic and casts doubt on the origin of the Quran.

# Chapter 11: IS ALLAH OF ISLAM THE TRUE GOD?

## The "Beautiful Names of Allah"

The "Beautiful Names of Allah" are the attributes of Allah in Islam. They are mentioned in the Quran in Sura Al-Araf 7:180: "And to Allah there are beautiful names so call him by them," and Sura Al-Isra 17:110: "Say call Allah or call the Merciful what you will call him for he has beautiful names." They are also mentioned in the hadiths. Abi Huraira narrates, "To Allah there are 99 names, 100 minus one; whoever does not recite them, will not enter heaven,"[591] and *Sunan Al Nisa* reiterates Abi Huraira's narration.[592]

In 2009, an elite group of Islamic theologians from Al Azhar, under the influence of Sheikh Dr. Mahmoud Abdel Razeq, changed some of the less appealing "Beautiful Names of Allah." The changes were endorsed by Saudi Arabia. Al Azhar agreed to undertake the printing and distribution of the new names to replace the old ones.[593] Why did this change take place? Can the traditions inherited from the forefathers be changed? (Note: Even though the names were changed, Muslims still tend to recite the old names.)

The most crucial question we need to ask is, do these names reflect attributes of the True God? The list includes names that are unworthy of His majesty, for instance, The Harmful, The Bringer of Death, The Humiliator, The Revengeful, The Compeller, The Boastful, The Forceful, The Cunning, The Misleader, The Deceiver, The One Who Urges on Lying and Hypocrisy, One who Incites Immorality and the One who Inspires Criminals Everywhere. How can Muslims accept that these names are beautiful or that they apply to God?

**The similarity between the "Beautiful Names of Allah" and the attributes of Satan in the Quran**

*Pride*

Allah of Mohammad is called "The Boastful:"

> "He is Allah who there is no god but him the holy king and peaceful the boastful great one." (Sura Al-Hashr 59:23)
>
> Abdullah Ibn Omar quotes the prophet who said, "God says; 'I am the Great One; I am the Greatest' so the Messenger of Allah began to repeat it until the pulpit shook and we thought that it would strike him."[594]

Satan is called "boastful:"

> "Said [Allah to Satan] Go down from it [from paradise] for it is not allowed to you to be boastful in it so go out for you are of the losers." (Sura Al-Araf 7:13)
>
> Al Razi quotes Qatada: "The devil boasted and was among the unbelievers, so the first sin was the sin of pride."[595]

*Deception*

Allah of Mohammad is "the best of deceivers:"

> "And they deceived, and Allah deceived, and Allah is the best of deceivers." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:54)
>
> "Narrated by Ibn Is'Haq: 'they deceived, and Allah deceived, and Allah is the best of deceivers,' means: deceived them with the skill of my deception."[596]

Satan is a deceiver:

> "[The hypocrites are] like the example of Satan when he says to man 'Disbelieve.' Indeed I am disassociated from you. Indeed, I fear Allah, Lord of the worlds." (Sura Al-Hashr 59:16)
>
> "The devil tempted man to disbelieve and turned around and accused him of disbelief, pretending he had nothing to do with it. He lured infidels then left them in sin."[597]





*Misguidance*

Allah of Mohammad misleads:

> "Do you wish to guide those whom Allah has sent astray? And he whom Allah sends astray – never will you find for him a way [of guidance]." (Sura An-Nisa 4:88)
>
> And it says, "Allah misled them, so they cannot find guidance, nor can they be guided to a way and whoever is guided away from guidance there is no guide for him."[598]

Satan is the misleader:

> "Satan wants to lead them far off the path." (Sura An-Nisa 4:60)
>
> And it says in *Adab al Nifoos*, "Satan misleads people."[599]
>
> And it says in *Ghareeb al Quran*, "Satan misleads people."[600]

*Inciting immorality*

Allah of Mohammad promotes immorality:

> "And when We will cause a town to perish, We command its [people] luxurious [life], then they committed immorality therein; so the Word came true against it, [and] then We destroyed it an utter destruction." (Sura Al-Isra 17:16)
>
> "And the soul and how he formed it and inspired it to good and evil." (Sura Ash-Shams 91:7-8)
>
> The hadiths of Mohammad: "An angel is sent to the womb of every pregnant woman breathing in it the spirit and predestining these four areas in life: wealth, health, career, and happiness. I swear by Allah that if one of you does the work of the people of paradise to where he is only an arm's length away from paradise, his predestined fate will take over and he will do work of the people of the fire and enter it. Likewise, if one of you does the work of people of the fire to where he is only an arm's length away, his predestined fate will take over and he will do the work of the people of paradise and will enter it."[601]

Why is there judgment if Allah misleads and even determines the eternal destiny before birth?

Satan promotes immorality:

"...Satan orders you to immorality." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:268)

"And Satan decorated for them what they were doing." (Sura Al-Anaam 6:43)

"And who follows the steps of Satan is enticed to immorality and wickedness." (Sura An-Noor 24:21)

"They are tempted and duped by Satan." (Sura Mohammad 47:25)

What do these similarities between the Allah of Mohammad and Satan indicate?

## Allah Promotes Murder and Terrorism

Both the Quran and the hadiths encourage murder and terrorism through the call for jihad. It is an invitation to bloodshed, beheading, intimidation of those who live safely, exile of the weak, exile of women, breaking of trusted covenants and spreading of panic and destruction.

### Stages of jihad

There are five stages to jihad that range from the benign to ruthless murder.

*Stage 1: Peaceful stage*

This stage emulates the approach Mohammad adopted for the first thirteen years of his calling while residing in Mecca. He was under the command of three persons who greatly impacted his life: his first wife Khadijah; her cousin, Waraqa Ibn Nofal, Bishop of Ebionite Christians in Mecca; and the monk Bohayra the Nestorian. (Note: The influence of Khadija on Mohammad is discussed in Chapters 7 & 10; the influence of the Ebionite heresy on Islamic beliefs is discussed in Chapter 3.)

During this early phase, many of the quranic verses he recited promoted tolerance and peace, for example:

"Who wants to believe, believe and who wants to disbelieve, disbelieve." (Sura Al-Kahf 18:29)





"You have your religion and I have mine." (Sura Al-Kafiroon 109:6)

"You are not a controller over them." (Sura Al-Ghashiya 88:22)

"And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a bringer of good tidings and a warner." (Sura Al-Furqan 25:56)

*Stage 2: Fighting in self defense*

After the deaths of Khadija, Waraqa Ibn Nofal and Bohayra, Mohammad left Mecca and immigrated to Medina where he started to defend Islam through jihad. There, he began receiving verses that encourage jihad as a form of self-defense.

"Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought; because they were wronged. And indeed, Allah is competent to give them victory. [They are] those who have been evicted from their homes without right – only because they say, 'Our Lord is Allah.' And were it not that Allah checks the people, some by means of others, there would have been demolished monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques in which the name of Allah is much mentioned. And Allah will surely support those who support Him." (Sura Al-Hajj 22:39-40)

"And kill them wherever you overtake them and expel them from wherever they have expelled you, and fitnah [sedition] is worse than killing. And do not fight them at Al-Masjid Al- Haram until they fight you there. But if they fight you, then kill them. Such is the recompense of the disbelievers." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:191)

"Fighting has been enjoined upon you while it is hateful to you. But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not. They ask you about the sacred month - about fighting therein. Say, 'Fighting therein is a great [sin], but averting [people] from the way of Allah and disbelief in Him and [preventing access to] Al-Masjid Al-Haram and the expulsion of its people wherefrom are greater [evil] in the sight of Allah. And fitnah is greater than killing.' And they will continue to fight you until they turn you back from your religion if they are able. And whoever of you reverts from his religion [to disbelief] and dies while he is a disbeliever – for those, their deeds

have become worthless in this world and the hereafter, and those are the companions of the Fire, they will abide therein eternally." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:216-217)

"And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them whom you do not know [but] whom Allah knows. And whatever you spend in the cause of Allah will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged." (Sura Al-Anfal 8:60)

*Stage 3: Killing infidels*

The stage of self-defense and defending religion developed into the killing of infidels because they were unbelievers. The quranic verses of this stage encouraged killing infidels.

"And when the sacred months have passed, then kill the polytheists wherever you find them and capture them and besiege them and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they should repent, establish prayer, and give Zakat, let them [go] on their way. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." (Sura At-Taubah 9:5)

"[Remember] when your Lord inspired the angels, 'I am with you, so strengthen those who have believed. I will cast horror into the hearts of those who disbelieved, so strike [them] upon the necks and strike from them every fingertip'." (Sura Al-Anfal 8:12)

"Fight them; Allah will punish them by your hands and will disgrace them and give you victory over them and satisfy the breasts of a believing people." (Sura At-Taubah 9:14)

"And let not their wealth and their children impress you. Allah only intends to punish them through their wealth and their children in this world and that their souls should depart [at death] while they are disbelievers." (Sura At-Taubah 9:85)

"O you who have believed, fight those adjacent to you of the disbelievers and let them find in you harshness. And know that Allah is with the righteous." (Sura At-Taubah 9:123)





*Stage 4: Killing to advance Islam*

Jihad developed further and instead of being a defense, it took the position of offence to spread the message of Islam at sword edge. The verses of the Quran Mohammad received carried an aggressive direct command for jihad. The hadiths also supported jihad with the purpose of spreading Islam.

Examples from the Quran:

"Fight them until there is no [more] fitnah and [until] worship is [acknowledged to be] for Allah. But if they cease, then there is to be no aggression except against the oppressors." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:193)

"Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam. And those who were given the Scripture did not differ except after knowledge had come to them – out of jealous animosity between themselves. And whoever disbelieves in the verses of Allah, then indeed, Allah is swift in [taking] account." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:19)

"And whoever wants other than Islam as a religion it will not be accepted from him and in the end he will be of the losers." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:85)

"Fight them or they will accept Islam." (Sura Al-Fath 48:16)

"Take them and kill them wherever you find them and don't take any of them as ally or helper." (Sura An-Nisa 4:89)

"Don't greet them or be sad when you are higher than them if you are believers." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:139)

"So do not weaken and call for peace while you are superior; and Allah is with you and will never deprive you of [the reward of] your deeds." (Sura Mohammad 47:35)

"Fight in Allah a true Jihad." (Sura Al-Hajj 22:78)

Examples from the hadiths:

*Sahih Al Bukhari* narrates, "Mohammad said, 'I command you to fight the people until they testify that there is no God but Allah, and Mohammad is the messenger of Allah and pray and give alms. If they

do this spare their lives and possessions and their reward is with Allah'."[602]

*The Aleppo Biography* mentions Mohammad saying, "I am commissioned with a sword in my hand until Allah alone is worshipped with no associates and I earn my living under the shadow of my spear and I shall disgrace and humiliate those who oppose my command."[603]

*Stage 5: Killing the "People of the Book"*

Who are the "People of the Book"? According to the Quran, the People of the Book are the Jews and the Christians.

"And We did certainly give Moses the Torah and followed up after him with messengers. And We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear proofs and supported him with the Pure Spirit. But is it [not] that every time a messenger came to you, [O Children of Israel], with what your souls did not desire, you were arrogant? And a party [of messengers] you denied and another party you killed." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:87)

"And We sent, following in their footsteps, Jesus, the son of Mary, confirming that which came before him in the Torah; and We gave him the Gospel, in which was guidance and light and confirming that which preceded it of the Torah as guidance and instruction for the righteous." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:46)

Some verses in the Quran show respect to the People of the Book.

"And do not argue with the People of the Scripture except in a way that is better, except for those who commit injustice among them, and say, 'We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you. And our God and your God is one; and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him'." (Sura Al-Ankaboot 29:46)

"You will surely find the most intense of the people in animosity toward the believers [to be] the Jews and those who associate others with Allah; and you will find the nearest of them in affection to the believers those who say, 'We are Christians.' That is because among





them are priests and monks and because they are not arrogant." (Sura Al-Maeda 5:82)

"Those who believed and those who were guided and the Christians and Sabeans who believed in Allah and the last day and did good have their reward with their Lord and they have no need to fear nor will they be disgraced." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:62)

In a later period, Mohammad received quranic verses that order Muslims to kill the People of the Book.

"Many of the People of the Scripture wish they could turn you back to disbelief after you have believed, out of envy from themselves [even] after the truth has become clear to them. So pardon and overlook until Allah delivers His command. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:109)

"A faction of the people of the Scripture wish they could mislead you. But they do not mislead except themselves, and they perceive [it] not." (Sura Ali-Imran 3:69)

"And He brought down those who supported them among the People of the Scripture from their fortresses and cast terror into their hearts [so that] a party you killed, and you took captive a party." (Sura Al-Ahzab 33:26)

"Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth from those who were given the Scripture – [fight] until they give the jizyah willingly while they are humbled." (Sura At-Taubah 9:29)

The verses of jihad that Mohammad received in stages reflect the strength he had at the time to enforce his will. They were expedient and relative to his situation, rather than the immutable commands of an eternal God.

## Allah Encourages Sexual Immorality

The Quran and the hadiths encourage sexual immorality on earth and in the life hereafter.

### Polygamy

> "And have sex [marriage] with what you have of women, two or three or four." (Sura An-Nisa 4:3)
>
> *Tafsir Muqatel*: "Allah's command is a permission to have four wives."[604]
>
> *Al-Umm* [The Mother]: "A Muslim cannot have more than four wives;"[605] adding, "And if the prophet was allowed to have nine wives this is a special ruling for him, peace be upon him; it is not applicable to anyone else."[606]

Notice that the number of wives is an indication of inequality between men and women in Islam. Is it allowed for a woman in Islam to have more than one husband?

### Sex slaves

> "Have sex [marry] what is possible to you of women; two or three or four and if you fear you will not treat them equally, only one or whatever your right hand possesses of slave girls." (Sura An-Nisa 4:3)
>
> "And forbidden also to you are the married women except what your right hand possesses [meaning prisoners and female prisoner of war]. They are permitted to you even if they are married and their husbands are alive." (Sura An-Nisa 4:24)

The hadiths explain the meaning of these verses in Sura An-Nisa 4.

> *Tafsir Al Jalalayn*: " 'What your right hand possesses' [of slave girls] because they have no rights as a wife." [607]
>
> *Tafsir Al Jalalayn*: " 'What your right hand possesses' is of the girls in exile, so you are allowed to have sex with them even if they have husbands in the house of war [not the house of Islam]."[608]
>
> *Tafsir Muqatel*: " 'What your right hand possesses' means the servants and others."[609]





> *Al Mudawena Al Qubra*: "Narrated by Abil Saeed Al Khudari who said: We had girl slaves from the Awtas Battle, but they were married. However, we wanted to have sex with them, so we asked the messenger of Allah about this: So Allah Almighty sent down a verse '...the married women, what your right hand possesses we have made permissible to you'."[610]

Interesting to note is that Mohammad's followers, the Bedouins, were more conscientious and felt uneasy about what Mohammad and his Allah freely allowed.

### "Pleasure marriage"

"Pleasure marriage" (also known as "temporary marriage") is marriage for a short period of time focused on sheer pleasure without any obligation.

> "So for whatever you enjoy from them, give them their due compensation as an obligation. And there is no blame upon you for what you mutually agree to, beyond the obligation." (Sura An-Nisa 4:24)
>
> *Tafsir Al Baghawi* on the meaning of this verse: " 'What you enjoyed from them' has different interpretations. Al Hassan and Mujahid believed the meaning is: for the sex you enjoyed with women in legal marriage, give them a dowry. Others said it is sex for fun [pleasure marriages] which means to have sex with a woman for a time and then the two may get separated, or their time together ends without divorce or shared inheritance and this was allowed at the beginning of Islam."[611]

Pleasure marriages extend to using slaves for sex.

> "And whoever among you cannot [find] the means to marry a free, believing woman, then [he may marry] from those whom your right hands possess of believing slave girls." (Sura An-Nisa 4:25)

There is an explanation in *Zubdat Al Tafsir* of the meaning of "a believing slave girl."

> "A slave girl who is Muslim and is owned...slave girls who are used for sex receive half the punishment of protected women...slave girls are a special possession, so it is permissible to have sex with them."[612]

### Nymphs of paradise

The Quran promises the nymphs of paradise, beautiful maidens who await devout Muslim men when they are recreated in paradise.

> "Who are laying on couches in rows and we married them to the beautiful nymphs." (Sura Al-Tur 52:20)
>
> "As well as we married them to Hur Ain [beautiful nymphs]." (Sura Ad-Dukhan 44:54)
>
> "In them are women limiting [their] glances, untouched before them by man or jinni...as if they were rubies and coral." (Sura Al-Rahman 55:56, 58)
>
> "And [for them are] fair women with large, [beautiful] eyes, the likenesses of pearls well-protected." (Sura Al-Waqia 56:22-23)
>
> "Indeed, We have produced the women of Paradise in a [new] creation, And made them virgins, devoted [to their husbands] and of equal age." (Sura Al-Waqia 56:35-37)

In addition to the fantasy pictured in the Quran, the commentators become more extreme in their fantasies.

> *Zad Al Maseer* about the nymphs: "Extremely white the whiteness of their eyes; extremely black, so black."[613]
>
> *Sahih al Bukhari*: "But the messenger of Allah said that in paradise there is a tent of pearls, the width of which is 60 miles, women don't see other women and the believers go around [to have sex] with them."[614]
>
> *Mu'jam Ibn Al Moqri*: "Narrated by Yahya Ibn Abi Katheer who quoted Mohammad: 'For every man of the people of paradise there are 72 wives – 70 of the women of paradise and two of the Arab women of this world'."[615]
>
> *Sunan Ibn Magah*: "Abi Amama narrated that the messenger of Allah said: 'Every man whom Allah allows into paradise will be given seventy-two wives, two from the nymphs and seventy from the women of the world. All the women will have much-desired private parts that no man can disdain'."[616]





> *Kanz Al 'Ommal*: "Mohammad Ibn Abdel Rahman Ibn Hateb quoted his father who got the story from his grandfather that the people of paradise will marry 4,000 virgins and 8,000 girls without husbands and 100 nymphs."[617]
>
> *Tafsir Ibn Katheer*: "There shall be seventy beds in the house, on each bed seventy mattresses on each mattress seventy wives."[618]
>
> *Tafsir Ibn Katheer*: "A man in paradise will be given the power of 100 men to have sex in one day with 100 virgins and they return to their initial state of virginity at the end of every day."[619]

An Allah immersed in sex!

## Allah and Women's Rights

Allah of Mohammad killed the rights of women in Islam, and it is he who inspired Mohammad to recite the specific rights of women in the Quran and prophetic hadiths. I will discuss how women are treated in Islam and touch briefly on how the Bible respects women's rights.

### Attacking female sanity and wisdom

Female sanity and intellectual capabilities are belittled in Islam and considered inferior compared to that of their male counterparts. We read in the Quran, "Men are superior to women with what Allah has preferred one over the other" (Sura An-Nisa 4:34). Mohammad said Allah preferred men to women for a reason, explained in the hadiths.

> *Tafsir Al Baghawi*: "Allah favored men over women with a greater portion of intellect; stewardship and witnessing."[620]
>
> *Tafsir Al Razi*: "There is no doubt that the minds of men and their knowledge are more superior, and men are favored with more intellect, firmness and strength than women."[621]

*Women are deficient of intellect and religion*

> *Sahih Al Bukhari:* "I have not seen those who are deficient in mind and religion [women]. 'They said: 'What is lacking in our religion and our mind, O Messenger of Allah?' He said: 'Is not the testimony of a

woman equivalent to half the testimony of a man?' This is a deficiency in women's religion'."[622]

*Illiteracy is for women*

*Kanz Al 'Ommal*: "Aisha said: 'Do not send women to classrooms, and do not teach them to write, but rather teach them yarn and Sura An-Noor 24."[623]

*Nizam Al Hoqumah*: "The hadith that says: 'Do not teach them to write' is valid; it was narrated by Al Hakem and confirmed by Al Bayhaqi."[624]

The prohibition of literacy in the hadiths is given to those who (Allah fears) may become corrupted as a result of education.[625]

*Hell was created for women*

According to *Tareekh Medina Damashk*, "The prophet said: 'Hell was created for the foolish and women are the most foolish of all'."[626] *Kanz Al 'Ommal* concurs, "It is so that the fire was created for the foolish and they are women."[627] *Sahih Muslim* states most clearly, "Most of those in hell are women."[628]

## Depriving women of honor and humanity

The hadiths are full of comparisons of women that dishonor women and even deprive them of humanity.

*Comparing women to animals*

*Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal*: "Abi Huraira narrated that the prophet of Allah said: 'Prayer is annulled when offered by a woman, a donkey, or a dog'."[629]

*Sahih Ibn Habban*: "Abi Ther narrated that the prophet of Allah said: 'what annuls a man's prayer is a donkey, a black dog or a woman.' I said: 'What difference is there between a black dog and a red dog or a yellow dog?' The messenger of Allah responded, 'a black dog is a devil'."[630]





*Sahih Al Bukhari*: "Aisha narrated a hadith in which Mohammad said 'what annuls prayer is – a dog, or donkey or woman.' She commented: 'So are you (Mohammad) comparing us to donkeys and dogs?' "[631]

*Umdet Al Qari:* "Akramah narrated a hadith in which the prophet said 'Prayer is annulled by a dog, a donkey, a pig, and a woman'."[632]

According to Musnad Abi Dawood, "Aisha narrated a hadith of the prophet: 'What do you know about what annuls prayer?' They responded, 'the dog and the donkey and the woman.' Aisha said: 'Then a woman is a grazing animal'."[633]

*Jam'eh Al Ahadeeth*: [The prophet said] "Women who are like the deaf crow will not enter paradise."[634]

*Comparing women to horses for value and pleasure*

*Musnad Ibn Al Ja'ed*: "Enjoy the pleasure of three things: a woman, a horse, and a good debate."[635]

*Sahih al Bukhari*: "Luck is in three things; a horse, a woman and a house."[636]

*Comparing women to Satan*

*Sahih Muslim*: "On one occasion, the messenger of Allah was sexually aroused when he saw a certain woman, so he went to his wife Zaynab with his needs and when he was satisfied, he went out to his friends he said: 'the woman comes in the image of Satan and leaves in the image of Satan'."[637]

## Assaulting women's freedom and personality

*Men are superior to women*

Sura An-Nisa 4:34 says, "Men are superior to women by what Allah provided one above the other." Al Tabari elaborates in his *Tafsir*: "Narrated by Al Dahhaq, 'Men are superior to women, so a man should command the woman to obey Allah but if she rebels he can beat her'."[638] Sura Al-Baqara 2:228 says, "Men are a degree higher than women." Again, Al Tabari elaborates: "This means the Almighty declares men superior to women and should discipline them…and they can beat the women."[639]

*Women have ten defects*

> *Eahya' Uloom Al Deen* narrates, "From the hadith of Ibn Massoud: 'A woman has ten defects, when she gets married, her husband covers only one defect; but when she dies the grave covers the ten."[640]

*Women are foolish*

> *Tareekh Madinat Damashk*: "The prophet said: 'Hell was created for the foolish and women are the most foolish of all'."[641]

*Forcing the hijab on women*

The Quran decrees women's covering and even limits their ability to see.

> "And tell the believing women to reduce some of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment, except that which necessarily appears thereof and to wrap a portion of their headcovers over their chests and not expose their adornment except to their husbands." (Sura An-Noor 24:31)

*Allowing domestic violence*

> *Tafsir Al Tabari:* "Narrated by Al Dahhaq, 'Men are superior to women, so a man should command the woman to obey Allah but if she rebels he can beat her'."[642]

> *Tafsir Al Tabari*: "This means the Almighty declares men superior to women and should discipline them...and they can beat the women."[643]

**Devaluing women's worth**

*A woman's testimony is worth half a man's*

The testimony of a woman in Islam equals half a man's testimony.

> "Let two of your men bear witness and if there is not two men let it be a man and two women." (Sura Al-Baqara 2:282)

Commentary about this verse occurs in some four hundred fifty traditional references, including *Al Durr Al Manthur*:





> "Narrated by Ibn Omar who said, 'the testimony of women is not permissible except concerning female issues of shame such as pregnancy and menstruation'."[644]

*A woman's inheritance is half that of a man*

Sura An-Nisa 4:11 says, "Allah commands you that regarding your children the male gets a portion like two females." *Tafsir Ibn Katheer* explains,

> "The difference between the two categories allowed the male to have twice the luck of a female. Men tolerate the cost and the suffering of trade and bear hardships, so they are given twice the portion of females."[645]

What happens when a woman goes to work like a man? Would the Allah of Mohammad change this unjust rule against women?

*A man is not obligated to pay for his wife's burial*

*Al Rawd Al Moraba*, which is on the curriculum of Al Azhar University, says,

> "A husband does not have to pay for the burial of his wife even if he is rich, because his obligation towards her is only limited to the duration of the marriage when he was able to get enjoyment; and is annulled by her death."[646]

*Prohibition of female judges*

An authentic hadith about the prophet Mohammad reports him saying, "The people will not succeed if a woman rules them."[647] Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal narrates in *Al Mughni Fi Fiqh*,

> "The prophet said: 'The people will not succeed if a woman rules over them because a judge attends debates that require a sane opinion, a sharp mind, and shrewdness. Women are lacking in intellect and their understanding is limited so they will not measure up to male counterparts'."[648]

### Disgracing a woman's body and infringing on her privacy

A woman's body is not respected in Islam and is used primarily for pleasure. This disrespect includes the "possessions of the right hand," i.e. slave girls given to Muslim masters even if the slave girls are married. Pleasure marriages and polygamy are as unjust to women as the need for a muhalil in the event a woman is declared divorced three times and wants to remarry her husband (see Chapter 7 under "Sex in Mohammad's Life"). Besides, Islam believes that the destiny of women is hell.

Having already mentioned many relevant quranic verses and hadiths in the previous discussion, I will limit my examples here to a few.

> "Your wives are farmland for you, so come to your place of cultivation however you wish." Sura Al-Baqara 2:223)
>
> *Tafsir Al Tabari*: "Narrated by Al Suddy: 'Your wives are your farmland, in other words a farm where you plant seeds'."[649]
>
> "Have sex with who you want of women, two or three or four." (Sura An-Nisa 4:3)
>
> The law of the muhalil, which goes into effect after the third time a husband declares verbally that he divorces his wife, is confirmed in Sura Al-Baqara 2:229, 230: "If he does it [divorce declaration] three times she is not permitted to him afterwards until she marries another man and have sex with him."

### Women in the Bible

There is remarkable contrast in what Islam says about women and what the Bible says about women. To examine what the Bible says would be a very long discourse outside the scope of this work; therefore, my comparison between women in Islam and women in the Bible will be very brief.

The Bible documents women having significant responsibilities and important roles. In the Old Testament, there were many females with the title of prophet including Miriam (Exodus 15:20), Hulda (2 Kings 22:14) and Noadiah (Nehemiah 6:14). In the New Testament, the prophetess Anna had a permanent place in the temple in Jerusalem and spoke over the infant Jesus at His circumcision (Luke 2:36-38). The Bible mentions





Deborah as a judge and leader of Israel (Judges 4:4), and commends Abigail as "a woman of good understanding" (1 Samuel 25:3).

Furthermore, the Bible is clear about the equality of men and women before God: "Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 11:11) and, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

### Women's human rights

On December 10, 1948, the United Nations proclaimed the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" as a "common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations." Article 1 says, "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."[650] In 1990, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation issued its own "Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam." Article 24 at the conclusion of the declaration establishes that all human rights are subject to sharia (the way of Mohammad).[651]

Is it conceivable that a man-made law is superior to and more humane than the law of the Allah of Mohammad?

***

The revelation of who Allah is, transmitted by inspiration to Mohammad and through him to all Muslims, is not beautiful, true or pure; rather, it reveals that the being called Allah is unworthy of worship and indeed opposite to the True Majesty of heaven. I pray Muslims everywhere will be relieved of this deception so they can see and worship the Holy God of the Bible.

# Part 3:
# THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

# OVERVIEW

Once Muslims' false beliefs about the Christian faith have been addressed, and they have begun to think objectively about Islam, then there is opportunity for Christian evangelists to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to them through words and actions. Muslims who accept Jesus' offer of salvation by faith then need to be guided in growth until they become mature in their faith and able to minister to others. Part 3, "The Christian Life," elaborates on this process.

### Evangelism

Evangelism involves communicating to non-believers the reality of the inherent sinfulness of humans beings and God the Father's overcoming, redeeming love, and inviting them to experience God's forgiveness and acceptance through believing in Jesus.

### Discipleship

Discipleship is a process whereby newborn believers' faith is nurtured and established, and they are cared for and trained to maturity within Christian community, until Christ is fully formed in them.

### Ministry and Leadership

The call to ministry is a sign of Christian life. In all aspects of ministry and leadership, Jesus Christ is our model and the Holy Spirit our help.

# Chapter 12: EVANGELISM

What is the message an evangelist should communicate to bring the love of Christ to people and help them accept Him as Lord and Savior? The message is simply the story of the creation, the fall, and God's redemption. It is the story of the never-ending, overwhelming love of God for humankind. When the message has been communicated, the evangelist invites the listeners, without pressure or intimidation, to choose to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their loving Savior. The decision to accept Christ must be based on knowing the truth about our sin and God's initiative to cover our sin, and is completely voluntary.

## Creation

### God's love

The Bible clearly states that in His love to mankind, God created man in His own image: "So God created man in His own image…In the image of God He created him" (Genesis 1:27). Then God blessed him and gave him authority over all His creation: "Then God blessed them (man and female), and God said to them…'Fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth' " (Genesis 1:28).

God expressed His great love for man after creation: "Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). When God created everything else, the Bible says, "And God saw that it was good" (Genesis 1:4, 11, 18, 21); but after God created humankind, He said it was "very good."

Before God created man, He created everything man needed, reflecting the depth of His love to man. He considered all the details, so He created light, day and night, land, oceans, plants, animals, birds and fish. Nothing was missing. St. Gregory expresses the love of God in the Coptic Mass,

writing, "Because of Your Dignified Works I was not in need of anything."

The Lord declared His great Love and joy toward man when He said, "My delight was with the sons of men" (Proverbs 8:31). The Apostle Paul writes, "Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love...Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Ephesians 1:4-5).

### Creation of humankind

Based on His Great Love, God created Adam and Eve. Genesis, the first book of the Bible, gives two accounts of this story.

> "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'
>
> "And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food;' and it was so. Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day." (Genesis 1:26-31)

> "And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.' Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. So





> Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.
>
> "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.
>
> "And Adam said: 'This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.' Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." (Genesis 2:18-25)

## The Fall

### The concept of sin

Sin is separation from God. Despite the love of God for man, Adam and Eve did not return His love. Sadly, their choice to follow their own personal will and not God's will revealed that they preferred to be separated from God. Their goals became self-centered, and life revolved around them and not God. So they found it suitable to receive knowledge from other sources, not from God, which led them to eat of the forbidden tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3:6). This was their way of saying to God, "Depart from us, for we do not desire the knowledge of Your ways" (Job 21:14). What the prophet Isaiah said came true: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way" (Isaiah 53:6).

Because of their disobedience (i.e. sin), they became separated from God: "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2).

The narrative of The Fall begins in Genesis 2:15-17.

> "Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, 'of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree

of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die'."

Genesis 3:1-13 continues,

"Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, 'Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?' And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, not shall you touch it, lest you die.' Then the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die, for God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'

"So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruits and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

"And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

"Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, 'Where are you?'

"So he said, 'I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.'

"And He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?'

"Then the man said, 'The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.'

"And the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?'

"The woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate'."





### The epidemic of sin

One of the most accurate expressions describing sin is found in the *Second Book of Wisdom* by Joshua Ben Sirach, which says, "When calamity befalls the proud, there is no healing, for an evil plant has taken root in him."[652] If we apply these words to Adam, we realize that his sin was a "sin of pride" because he wanted to be like God (Genesis 3:5). The virus of evil took root in him and contaminated the pure nature with which God created him.

Just as a virus infects our physical body and causes illness, the sin virus causes man to lose his spiritual health. For example, if a person's eye becomes infected and gets swollen, irritated and red, the whole body will be affected. In the same way, when sin attacks, life becomes unmanageable, and one succumbs to the power of sin. This is exactly what happened with Adam and Eve. Thus sin spread to the entire human race, and all humans inherited the corrupted nature because of The Fall.

### The dominion of sin

The Apostle Paul explains that by Adam falling into sin, sin entered the world: "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12). Thus, sin took dominion over the entire human race because all sinned: "They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one" (Romans 3:12). Humans inherited Adam and Eve's corrupted and sinful nature. In other words, the entire human race inherited the consequences of sin that is the corrupted and sinful nature, "because all sinned."

Sin separates us from God.

## Judgment

### The inevitability of punishment:

The Lord God warned Adam when He created him and placed him in the Garden of Eden, saying, "...of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17). However, Adam ate from the forbidden tree and so

deserved punishment. Adam and his wife immediately realized their nakedness and attempted to hide themselves from God when He came walking in the garden, but He called out to them and questioned them about what they had done. Their response was to blame others – Adam blamed his wife, and she blamed the serpent.

> "So the Lord God said to the serpent: 'Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.'
>
> "To the woman He said: 'I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.'
>
> "Then to Adam He said, 'Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': 'Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.'
>
> "And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.
>
> "Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.
>
> "Then the Lord God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever' – therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life." (Genesis 3:14-24)





Thus, the just judgment of God fell on humankind and we were separated from God, "for the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

**Types of punishment**

The penalty of death comprises spiritual death, physical death and moral death extending to eternal death.

*Spiritual death*

Spiritual death is expulsion from paradise and separation from God's Divine presence. God created Adam and placed him in paradise to dwell in it forever. But after he sinned, the Lord God sent him out of paradise: "Therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken" (Genesis 3:23).

The Lord placed cherubim with a flaming sword to prevent Adam from returning to the garden. This is because the pure and righteous nature in which Adam was created before his fall no longer existed, and his new sinful nature did not qualify him to reside in the holiness and purity of God's presence. This is spiritual death, which is separation from God, that is, exile from His divine presence.

*Physical death*

Through sin the entire human race was contaminated, for Romans 3:12 tells us, "They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable." Corruption spread in the human body leading it to further degradation until it returns to dust: "Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). "It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). This is physical death.

*Moral death (shame)*

The Holy Bible says God created man in His own image and in dignity and placed him in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2). But when he sinned, he was expelled from the garden and lost his dignity and was covered with shame and disgrace. He then realized he was naked, not clothed in righteousness and purity (Genesis 3:10). Shame is truly what follows the sinner, for the Bible says, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). This is moral death.

What better illustration of this condemnation than the story of Samson who deserted the righteous living he once enjoyed and committed sin with Delilah. What happened to him afterwards? After he was captured, his eyes were gouged, and he became a grinder in prison like a beast. He was mocked and covered with shame and disgrace. "A man who is in honor, yet does not understand, is like the beasts that perish" (Psalm 49:20).

*Eternal death*

Punishment for sin is not only Adam's expulsion from paradise and his inability to return, but also includes his eternal death in the fire of hell.

The Bible records what the Lord will say to the wicked on Judgment Day: "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels' " (Matthew 25:41). "So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 13:49-50). This is what the Bible calls eternal death.

### Humankind and punishment

Punishment spread to Adam's descendants as the Scripture says, "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12). Through genetics, all people inherit the corrupt and sinful nature of Adam and Eve, which requires God's just judgment by death, "for in Adam all die" (1 Corinthians 15:22).

The result is that we all inherit our father's corrupt nature and are lured with pleasures and lusts into committing sin, and thus all deserve punishment, "for the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Romans 3:19).

## Redemption Through Christ

Sin brought about death. However, God in His love did not watch from a distance. He took the initiative and sent Jesus Christ to earth to show





humankind His love by bearing sin's death penalty in His own body. Jesus atoned for our sin with His blood in order to grant us forgiveness, removing the abysmal gap between God and us and restoring our relationship with Him. God's initiative through Christ was complete, including the essential elements of love, remission of sin, reconciliation, blood atonement and invitation.

### Divine love

The Bible describes God as a God of love who takes action to demonstrate His love and to save the entire world.

> "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)
>
> "But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)
>
> "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you." (Jeremiah 31:3)
>
> "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ, (by grace you have been saved)." (Ephesians 2:4-5)

### Remission of sin

According to the Bible, remission of sin is the result of God's love and mercy.

> "And the Lord passed before [Moses] and proclaimed, 'The Lord God, merciful and gracious…forgiving iniquity and transgression of sin'." (Exodus 34:6-7)
>
> "But You are God, ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in kindness and did not forsake them." (Nehemiah 9:17)
>
> "[Bless the Lord] who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies." (Psalms 103:4)

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." (Isaiah 55:7)

"He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." (Colossians 1:13-14)

**Amicable reconciliation**

Christ took His initiative of love on the cross to reconcile humankind who lived in enmity with God.

"Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation." (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)

"And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation." (Romans 5:11)

"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ." (Ephesians 2:13)

The theologian St. Gregorios describes reconciliation:

"When man fell in the temptation of the enemy and disobeyed Your holy commandments, You wanted to renew him and bring him back to his former state. No angel and no archangel, no fathers or prophets You trusted for our salvation, but You became incarnate taking the form of man...And You became for us the Mediator unto the Father, and You destroyed the barrier that separated us and demolished the old enmity, and You reconciled the earthly with the heavenly and You made the two, one..."[653]

**Atonement by blood**

Christ's complete work on the cross was an initiative of atonement, redemption and salvation.





"[Christ Jesus,] whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed." (Romans 3:25)

"And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world." (1 John 2:2)

"[For all]...being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Romans 3:24)

"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." (Ephesians 1:7)

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit." (1 Peter 3:18)

This is the Lord Jesus Christ's initiative and His great love – He gave Himself as ransom to bring us back to our loving Heavenly Father.

**A personal invitation**

The Lord Jesus is knocking on the door of our hearts: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20). They are the same knockings with which He knocked on the door of the bride's heart in The Song of Solomon 5:2-6:

"I sleep, but my heart is awake; it is the voice of my beloved! He knocks, saying, 'Open for me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one; for my head is covered with dew, my locks with the drops of the night.' I have taken off my robe; how can I put it on again? I have washed my feet; how can I defile them? My beloved put his hand by the latch of the door, and my heart yearned for him. I arose to open for my beloved and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with liquid myrrh, on the handles of the lock. I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had turned away and was gone. My heart leaped up when he spoke, I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer."

Because the bride hesitated to open the door at his invitation, he turned away and was gone, and she suffered thereafter. The same invitation is offered to every person. The Lord stands at the door of our hearts and knocks; either we open the door, welcome Him in and become children of God; or we reject God's invitation, thereby choosing death.

In His patient lovingkindness, Jesus gives us many chances to welcome Him into our hearts. But none of us knows what will happen to us in the next moments or years of our lives, and there will come a time when time has run out for us to say "Yes" to the One who alone can save us from just punishment for sin.

## The Crucial Decision

### Realization

Upon receiving the news of God's love, each one is responsible to make the most crucial of all decisions. Rejecting this love means being eternally separated from God even after death, and this is eternal spiritual death. Accepting Jesus' invitation guarantees that the relationship with God returns to the glorious image that God intended when He created Adam, and whoever accepts becomes a child of God: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12). God's children live in His presence eternally.

This crucial decision to receive the Lord Jesus always involves repentance.

### Repentance

Repentance happens when a person realizes he is lost and decides to return to the arms of the loving Father.

> "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin." (Ezekiel 18:30)
>
> "From that time, Jesus began to preach and to say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'." (Matthew 4:17)
>
> "But unless you repent you will all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3)





> "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." (Acts 3:19)
>
> "In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent." (Acts 17:30)

### Acceptance

Acceptance is accepting God's love by faith. Accepting the Lord Jesus Christ, the loving King, in the heart is the essence of the Christian spiritual faith. The word "believer" describes the person who has believed in and received Christ. John the Apostle says, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12).

When a human being receives the Lord, the Message of Salvation has achieved its goal.

### Faith

The coming of the Lord Jesus into one's heart has shortened the distance between heaven and earth. There is no longer any difficulty in meeting with the Lord, and there is no need to think about ascending to heaven or descending into the abyss to meet the Lord Jesus Christ.

> "But the righteousness of faith speaks this way, 'Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, 'Who will descend into the abyss?' "(that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved, for with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:6-10)

Faith is believing the biblical truths and believing that the Lord Jesus Christ will instantaneously enter your heart the moment you ask Him. The Apostle Paul states simply, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26).

*Accepting Christ* [654] is an excellent resource for further information on this topic.

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God's eternal love is ours. "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Every person needs to hear about what God's love has done for us.





# Chapter 13: DISCIPLESHIP

Jesus spoke to his disciples, saying, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, [even] to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20). In this command to disciple all nations, Jesus establishes the concept of discipleship by saying, "teaching them..." Discipleship is education. The pupil learns, and in order to learn, needs both a teacher and a curriculum.

The believer who has accepted Christ needs to be educated according to a spiritual curriculum which leads the new believer through the stages of spiritual life to reach the desired perfection, about which the Apostle Paul says, "He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ." (Colossians 1:28). A perfect person is a mature person, so the believer is called to the life of growth to reach spiritual maturity.

The three stages of discipleship that a believer must live in order to achieve this spiritual perfection or maturity are (1) standing firm (or abiding) in Christ, (2) spiritual growth and (3) maturity in Christ.

## Abiding in Christ

Abiding in Christ is an absolute necessity after accepting Him as Lord and Savior. It enables us to enjoy our relationship with God our Father as His adopted child.

### Absolute necessity

A person who begins his new life in repentance must keep himself steadfast in Christ. Steadfastness is a divine commandment, as the Apostle Paul writes to the believers in Philippi, "Therefore, my beloved and

longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved" (Philippians 4:1). Steadfastness is also a true sign of discipleship. Jesus says, "...If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed" (John 8:31). On the other hand, He tells His disciples that wandering away is perilous: "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and are burned" (John 15:6).

The Apostles focused on remaining in Christ. In the early days of the church, it was said about Barnabas, "When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord" (Acts 11:23). Therefore, one who accepts Christ and gets baptized is secured in the sacred anointing: "But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as His anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie – just as it has taught you, abide in Him" (1 John 2:27). Disciples also abide in the Lord through participating in communion, as the Lord says, "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in them" (John 6:56).

### A clear purpose

To be steadfast is to abide in the love of God, the Father, free from the negative fear of God. The unfailing, never-ending love of the Father shields us from doubts the enemy plants in our mind against receiving God's love and His forgiveness. King David the psalmist says, "My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and give praise" (Psalm 57:7).

The purpose of steadfastness is enjoying the peace, security and confidence that are the blessings of being in Christ.

### A foundational belief

The foundational belief that keeps us steadfast in the Lord and in His love is our adoption. Those who start their repentant life with Christ and receive Him in their hearts and their lives become God's children, and He becomes their Father. The Lord Jesus continually pointed to God's Fatherhood, teaching us to pray, "Our Father in heaven..." (Matthew 6:9).





God is our Father. "[As God has said]...'I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,' says the Lord Almighty" (2 Corinthians 6:18). John the Apostle confirms this truth, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12).

At this level of faith, we believers enjoy God our Father along with His family, the church. His fellowship is precious, His word a treasure to keep. He welcomes relationship with us, cares for us, faces our enemies, forgives our trespasses, does not leave us to despair, resides in our hearts through His spirit, protects our inheritance and transforms us. For further reading on this topic, refer to my book, *Standing Firm in Christ.*[655]

Steadfastness in the Lord enables disciples to enter the second phase of faith, which the Apostle Peter aptly describes: "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen" (2 Peter 3:18).

## Spiritual Growth in Christ

### The importance of spiritual growth

There is no doubt about the value of spiritual growth to a disciple. A believer who does not progress in spiritual life and growth will remain an immature babe in faith. Lack of spiritual growth is a warning sign that the person has not seriously begun his walk with Christ and needs to search his heart.

*Following Christ's example*

Christianity is about being transformed to be like Christ, who in His human flesh (God on earth) was continuously growing in His life and faith, as the Bible records, "And the Child [Jesus] grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him" (Luke 2:40). Therefore, as Christ grew, so we must also grow because He set an example to follow His steps, "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps" (1 Peter 2:21).

*Growth is a divine command*

Growth is not optional. Some may prefer to stay babes, perhaps in anticipation of receiving more pampering, while others find it hard to let go of things that appease the flesh. But the Bible commands us to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). Spiritual growth is essential and inevitable for anyone who faithfully desires God to use him for the Kingdom.

*Spiritual growth is evidence of life*

Every living creature must grow, and the believer is a spiritual living being; therefore, he must grow. Jesus compares the spiritual equivalent (the kingdom of God) to the natural growth of seeds: "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how." (Mark 4:26-27)

The Apostle Paul rebukes the Corinthian believers for remaining infants: "Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly – mere infants in Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:1). The believer must aim towards spiritual maturity: "When I was a child, I spoke as a child; I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Corinthians 13:11).

Thus the value and significance of growing spiritually lie in following Christ's example, obeying God's commandment and having the signs of life.

**The goal of spiritual growth**

Goals determine actions. Without setting goals, a person will be revolving around himself, repeatedly doing the same things in vain. Therefore, the Bible lays out the goals of spiritual growth.

1. *Being formed in Christ's image*: "My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you…" (Galatians 4:19).
2. *Being transformed into Christ's image*: "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18). The Bible is the mirror that reflects the image of Christ and helps us to be transformed into the same image.
3. *Being conformed to the image of Christ*: "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Romans 8:29). This is the goal of the new life that God has given to us.





This means that the primary goal of spiritual growth is not merely to be adorned with virtues, however great they might be, but to attain the image of Christ. In other words, the image of Christ should be revealed or seen in our behavior, actions, words, silence and service.

St. Athanasius says, "All that of Christ the Son by nature is given to us by grace."[656]

**The sources of spiritual growth**

There are two essential sources for spiritual growth, the divine and the human.

*The divine side*

God Himself through His Spirit is the one who helps the believer to grow. "So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow" (1 Corinthians 3:7). The Lord Jesus says, "For without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

*The human side*

God's power cannot be completely experienced in our lives unless we allow God complete dominion over our lives. We achieve this through spiritual disciplines, which include:

- Diligently setting a daily time for Bible reading
- Meditating on the Word of God
- Memorizing Scripture and applying it in our lives
- Praying
- Confessing our sins and asking for forgiveness
- Fellowshipping with other Christians and taking communion
- Fighting against sin, the world, the flesh and the devil and refusing their views and temptations

- Becoming profoundly saturated with Christ's beauty (as David says about Him in Psalm 45:2, "You are fairer than the sons of men")
- Striving daily to heed the voice of God through His Word until the Word of God becomes a way of life (as Paul the Apostle says in Acts 24:16, "I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.")

St. Clement of Alexandria comments on 1 Peter 2:2, "As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the Word that you may grow thereby," saying, "It is the milk of love! Blessed is he who nurses from it! It is available in winter, as well as in summer. It does not need to be heated or cooled, for it is always ready."

### Plan of spiritual growth

To achieve spiritual maturity, a believer should gaze upon the beauty of Christ to be able to follow His example. Consider the splendor of Christ, who is fairer than the sons of men, the greatest High Priest, the Good Shepherd, the Great Teacher, the pearl of great price, genuinely humble and meek. Jesus is our model in fulfilling the Law, for sincere love and for sacrificial service.

For further study on spiritual growth, see my book, *Growth in Christ.* [657]

## Maturity in Christ

### Purpose of maturity

Maturity enables us to consistently display the presence of Christ in our lives until his life becomes our life.

> "We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that His life may also be revealed in our mortal body." (2 Corinthians 4:10-11)

Where is Christ in our lives?

*Before repentance*: There is no room for Christ.





*Accepting Christ*: There is little room for Christ.

*Abiding in Christ*: There is a secure spot for Christ.

*Spiritual growth*: Christ has the first place.

*Maturity*: Christ has the ONLY place and we relate to others based on our relationship with Him.

Each of these stages has its specific characteristics:

*Before repentance*: I live, but Christ is dead to me.

A newborn and steadfast believer: I live with Christ.

*Growth*: Christ and I live.

*Maturity*: Christ lives, not me (Galatians 2:20).

### Focus of maturity

There is a distinction between goal and focus. When someone gets ill, his goal is to recover, but his focus is on the treatment that will help him recover. The focus of maturity is being filled with the Holy Spirit, and we receive Him by faith. We cannot advance in maturity without the Holy Spirit increasing in us.

There are three levels of relationship with the Holy Spirit:

*Dwelling*: "Don't you know that you are the temple of the Holy Spirit Who dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16)

*Filling*: "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them…" (Acts 4:8)

*Overflowing*: " 'Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' By this He meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified." (John 7:38-39)

## Plan of maturity

*The privilege of our existence in Christ*

The existence of the believer in Christ means there is a powerful bond between the believer and Christ. "At that day you will know that I [am] in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you" (John 14:20). The faithful believer has many blessings, as the apostle Paul says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). The existence of the believer in Christ can be likened to the presence of the fetus in the mother's womb in her protection and care.

*The privilege of Christ's presence in us*

The concept of Christ dwelling in the believer's heart by faith in the stage of maturity means that the believer gives opportunity to the Holy Spirit (i.e. the Spirit of Christ) to rule in His domain and work in the life of the believer on a daily basis. In maturity, we focus on the privilege of being worthy of the Holy Spirit, as Paul the Apostle says, "Do not you know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16). As a result, the Spirit of God works in me, testifying to my love for God and my fellowship and unity with Him. He forms me in the image of Christ, renews, sanctifies, grants spiritual power, leads, facilitates the Spirit of prayer, imparts wisdom and fills me with love for others.

*The privilege of Christ's presence and confronting problems*

Actually, the practical application of the existence of Christ in my life is the confronting of problems. The mature believer demonstrates how well he perceives the excellence of his existence in Christ by his responses to problems, a realization that should be tested by the fire of troubles so that the mature believer comes forth as pure gold. "[When] He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).

*The privilege of Christ's presence and brotherly love*

Spiritual maturity liberates us from turning around the axis of self into the territory of practicing brotherly love in the Spirit of Christ who lives in





me, loves through me and binds me in a holy bond with the rest of the members of His body.

*The privilege of Christ's presence and the ministry of evangelism*

One of the signs of life in mature believers is that the way is open for the Lord Jesus Christ to work and preach the Gospel through them, just as He did while He lived on earth in the flesh. The Apostle Peter, speaking to a group of Gentiles, described "how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38).

Before his ascension to heaven, the Lord Jesus emphasized two commands: "Go and preach..." (Mark 16:15) and "Go and make disciples..." (Matthew 28:19). His disciples were to preach the Gospel of grace and good news about Christ's death and salvation. Discipleship, "making disciples," is spiritual construction, the teaching and preparation of servants.

*Living in God's presence and constant prayer*

A truly mature believer is the person who lives all his life with the Lord and in His presence. This is the posture of the upright (the mature) about whom we are told by David the prophet, "Surely the righteous shall give thanks to Your name; The upright shall dwell in Your presence" (Psalm 140:13).

*Living in God's presence according to His will*

A mature believer is the believer who always lives in the presence of God, so that his will conforms to the will of God. He will override his personal will to fulfill the will of Christ in his life. The believer who is aware of his existence in the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords must leave his will and counsel to Him, and live according to the will of God in all aspects of his life, as Jesus made manifest when He prayed on the night of His betrayal, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Yours, be done" (Luke 22:42).

*Living in God's presence and the life of purity*

Purity is a true fruit of being in the presence of God, without repression or trouble, but in spontaneity and effortlessness, as the author of the psalm says, "I have set the Lord always before me; because [He is] at my right hand I shall not be moved" (Psalm 16:8).

*Spiritual maturity and the life of suffering*

The mature believer has rooted his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever he encounters in the life of faith from experiences, tribulations or pains increases his steadfastness and perseverance to continue the path to the end, for he fully understands God's wisdom of pain. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding [and] eternal weight of glory (2 Corinthians 4:17).

*Spiritual maturity and working in the spirit of unity*

One of the characteristics of spiritual maturity is that mature members of a group, with their diversity, talents and gifts, complement one another to accomplish the work of God and achieve His goals. For a group to work as a team, their souls and their personal goals must die to self for Christ to live in them. "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all (Colossians 3:11).

*Some of the blessings we experience through maturity in Christ*

The privilege of spiritual maturity is the fullness of the Holy Spirit with its three levels:

1. *The dwelling of the Spirit*: "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and [that] the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16)
2. *The fullness of the Spirit*: "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit." (Ephesians 5:18)
3. *The flood of the Spirit*: "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." (John 7:38)





**Achieving mutual existence in Christ**

Christ indwells the heart of the believer by faith: "...that Christ might dwell in your hearts by faith" (Ephesians 3:17). Jesus, the Lord of Glory, says, "In that day you will know that I am in My Father and you are in Me and I in you" (John 14:20). The presence of Christ in the believer by faith is the practical result of remaining in Christ after accepting Him, becoming a child of God and enjoying adoption. This is the stage of abiding, or steadfastness in Christ, in which the believer's focus is on the privileges received through adoption and having God as Father (see John 1:12 and Ephesians 1:5).

**Continuously living in the presence of God**

In the stage of maturity, the emphasis shifts to connecting with the Holy Spirit as Ephesians 5:18 exhorts: "Be filled with the Spirit." The imperative in the Greek language indicates a continuous action so that we are aware of the presence of Jesus moment by moment and enjoy a continuous filling with the Holy Spirit. In this stage, we give the Holy Spirit permission to take first place and work in us on a daily basis. There is an uninterrupted recognition of the indwelling of Christ in the heart and continuous filling with the Holy Spirit.

To achieve the goal of living continuously in the presence of the Lord, we need to focus on Jesus all the time through keeping His commandments. Jesus instructs His followers, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him" (John 14:21).

Mature disciples practice the presence of God continuously. David, who was prophet, priest and king, knew the benefits of living continuously in the presence of the Lord. He says, "I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved" (Psalm 16:8).

The mature believer is the person who lives every moment in the presence of the Lord, described in the experience of David as follows:

> "One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord [in the presence of the Lord] all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple." (Psalm 27:4)

For further reading, see my book on *Maturity in Christ.* [658]

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This chapter has been a theoretical introduction to discipleship and a synopsis of my earlier writings that deal in detail with the three stages of discipleship:

Books 1 & 2: Standing Firm in Christ

Books 3 & 4: Spiritual Growth

Books 5 & 6: Maturity in Christ

Each book comprises 24 lessons for disciples. The aim is that disciples will grow spiritually and attain spiritual maturity. The books are currently available in Arabic and will become available in English.





# Chapter 14: MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

Christ, our role model, was a leader who had all wisdom to train a complete team of competent leaders to work in different fields of ministry. Through those few leaders, He changed the world.

## Ministry

Ministry is an assignment and a calling from the Lord – a commission, not a privileged position to achieve worldly honor. It is a commitment of love to the Lord and fellowship of love with and for others that the Lord lays on the commissioned to fulfill. [659]

Ministry is a calling to self-sacrifice, to give oneself. This is what Christ exemplified on earth, for "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give Himself a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). The Apostle Paul was self-sacrificing to the extent that "I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh [i.e. the Jews]" (Romans 9:3). They are our models.

### Purpose of ministry

Our Blessed Lord came to earth with one mission – to save souls. Paul clothed himself with the passion of Christ's mission, saying, "I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible," and "I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some" (1 Corinthians 9:19, 22).

God's final purpose is to conform us as individuals to the image of His Son, "...until Christ is formed in you" (Galatians 4:19); and to build the Church together, glorious and complete so that He may "present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other

blemish, but holy and blameless" (Ephesians 5:27). How great is the purpose of ministry!

**Qualifications for ministry**

Everyone considering getting into ministry should…

*Have experienced new life in Christ*

> "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

*Be filled with the love of Christ*

> "For the love of Christ compels us." (2 Corinthians 5:14)

*Make ministry a priority*

> "…I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me – the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace." (Acts 20:24)

*Be filled with the Holy Spirit*

> "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts. 1:8)

*Focus on the Lord*

> The greatest guarantee of success in ministry is that we keep the Lord constantly before us and follow Him closely. "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, My servant will be also." (John 12:26)

*Count the cost*

> "If anyone desires to come after Me let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." (Luke 9:23)

*Be purpose-driven*

> A clear goal and vision are crucial for the success of the ministry. "Without a vision the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18, KJV)





*Be vigilant and watchful*

> Every minister should realize that the little things matter. "Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training." (1Corinthians 9:25)

*Not despair*

> The enemy will not rest, and there might be moments of defeat, but remember that in Christ "we are more than conquerors" (Romans 8:37) and that God has given us the Spirit of power that cannot fail. "For God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).

*Recognize one's spiritual gifting*

Every member of the body of Christ has his own special function, and every one in ministry knows his spiritual gift(s) from the Lord.

> "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power for ever and ever, Amen." (1 Peter 4:10-11)

**Pattern for ministry**

The commissioned minister must humble himself as Christ did with His disciples.

> "When He [Jesus] finished washing their feet, He put on His clothes and returned to His place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' He asked them. 'You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.' " (John 13:12-17)

### One body, one mission

God has put many members (individuals) in one body (the Church) to complement each other. Ministry is doing the work God has assigned for me, in dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit, for "...each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function" (Romans12:4).

> "So Christ Himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip His people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.
>
> "Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the head, that is, Christ. From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." (Ephesians 4:11-16)

## Spiritual Leadership

Leadership is the ability, by the grace of God, to move a group by directing its members so that each one assumes his role for the fulfillment of God's exalted purpose. Leadership requires:

- The ability to discover a person's potential and to delegate responsibilities
- Making the Supreme Leader Jesus Christ manifest by submitting in obedience to His wise leadership so that the members of your group achieve the goal
- Developing leadership skills through continuous training, hands-on experience and being open to the leadership of the Holy Spirit
- Focusing on the value of each person as well as achieving the goal





### The importance of training leaders

Training is very important to do the work of God wisely and with the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Leaders need continuous training to learn to delegate and not run a one-person show. Delegating requires choosing the right people, giving them responsibilities and following up with love and encouragement to achieve the goal.

The Lord Jesus trained His disciples. He is the ultimate example of wise spiritual leadership. He did not do every aspect of the ministry alone, but trained the disciples He chose to fulfill His goal in the world. He charged them to evangelize, and during His earthly ministry, He sent His disciples to the lost sheep of the House of Israel (Matthew 10:5-42). Immediately before His ascension, He commanded them to evangelize the whole world, saying, "Go into all the world and preach this Gospel to all the creation" (Mark 16:15). He outlined the plan they needed to follow to spread the Gospel: "And you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The Apostle Paul trained church leaders using the same approach as the Lord Jesus Christ. He diligently trained leaders like Timothy and Titus to serve. "... if I am delayed," he writes to Timothy, "you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). To Titus he writes, "The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you" (Titus 1:5).

### Focus of leadership training

To achieve the goal of training leaders, trainers need the Spirit of wisdom, counsel and divine management.

*Wisdom*

The Bible tells us that the key to King Solomon's success in managing the affairs of God's people was asking for wisdom.

> "That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, 'Ask for whatever you want Me to give you.' Solomon answered God, 'You have shown great kindness to David my father and have made me

king in his place. Now, Lord God, let your promise to my father David be confirmed, for You have made me king over a people who are as numerous as the dust of the earth. Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of Yours?" (2 Chronicles 1:7-10)

Divine wisdom gives sound reasoning, integrity and knowledge.

"I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion. To fear the Lord is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech. Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have insight, I have power." (Proverbs 8:12-14)

*Peaceable thinking*

In Christ, we are transformed by the renewing of our minds, so we think like Him (Romans 12:2).

"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:2-3)

"We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:5)

*Inspired expression*

Being filled with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of wisdom, counsel, understanding and discretion, sets the wisdom of those who are filled with the Spirit far above the wisdom of those who are not.

"For it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you." (Matthew 10:20)

"For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict." (Luke 21:15)

**Qualifications for leadership**

The senior leader should play an active role in selecting new leaders. Jesus Christ spent a whole night praying before he chose the ministry leaders of the New Testament Church. The Gospel writer Luke tells us, "...He





went out to the mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples [all the believers] to Himself; and from them chose twelve whom He also named apostles" (Luke 6:12-13).

In selecting new leaders, one should look for believers who...

- Feel burdened for lost souls and whose hearts swell with love
- Are able to handle responsibilities assigned to them even if they must sacrifice time, comfort, etc.
- Are able to maintain good relationships with other members of the body and are good team players
- Believe in delegating responsibilities
- Are faithful in small things, so can be trusted with the more substantial stuff
- Are able to face difficult situations in the Spirit of prayer without discouragement, confusion or tension
- Are flexible and have the humility to listen to others
- Know how to handle criticism
- Maintain strong family ties and are faithful to their own households
- Are filled with the Holy Spirit and totally submitted to His guidance
- Are able to discern a dead end and walk away at the right time in the right spirit
- Are accountable and transparent

Leaders should not seek positions to satisfy a need for appreciation or to exercise mastery or control over others, but be driven by the faithful love of Christ for the sole purpose of glorifying God's name and spreading His kingdom.

**Developing leaders' personal lives**

The personal life of the leader includes three vital relationships: with God, with others and with oneself.

*Relationship with God*

God loves to make Himself and His ways known to His people. That is the "divine side" (mentioned in Chapter 13). In response, leaders must

diligently seek Him with repentant hearts and a longing to know Him better. That is the "human side."

> "He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the children of Israel." (Psalm 103:7)
>
> "So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend." (Exodus 33:11)
>
> "I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men." (Acts 24:16)
>
> "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." (John 17:3)

*Relationships with others*

The Apostle Paul instructed Timothy about how to choose leaders (overseers or bishops) in the churches according to how they are known to relate to others. He says leaders must be…

> "…not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous, one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." (1 Timothy 3:3-7)

The leader must also care for the development of relationships especially with other members of the ministry team. Good relationships are not just successful transactions; they are much more and extend to genuine love, being sensitive to the needs of others and understanding healthy boundaries.

**Developing leadership skills**

Successful leadership is proficient in using administrative skills such as planning, organization, direction, follow-up, course correction and results evaluation. For further reading on these administrative skills, see *Spiritual*





*Leadership* by the author,[660] which is published in Arabic and will soon be available in English.

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Mature believers engage in ministry and become leaders in the sphere that God gives them, whether in their families, circle of friends, church, city, nation or world. To be true ministers and leaders, each one must follow the Supreme Leader, Jesus Christ our Lord, and glorify Him alone.

# CONCLUSION

This work is an academic study that examines Islam from the time it was first started by Mohammad until today. The goal of this study is two-fold: to help Muslims understand the reality of Islam and consider eternal life, and to equip evangelists to explain the truth to Muslims. After the reality of Islam has been exposed to Muslims, then they must be helped in their search for Truth so that they find salvation. Whoever of them believes must be followed up and helped in their daily walk with God towards maturity and ministry.

I pray that God would use this study for the benefit of many.

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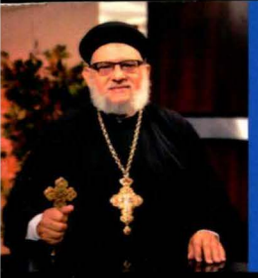

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## According to Islamic Sources

***About Rev. Dr. Zakaria Botros***

God used Father Zakaria to achieve extraordinary results that have not been precedented in the 1400 years of mission to Muslims.

Although one of his brothers was murdered for preaching the Good News of Jesus, Fr. Zakaria developed a supernatural love for Muslims globally. He had an encounter with the Holy Spirit in 1964, which altered the trajectory of his ministry. Compelled by the Great Commission, Fr. Zakaria devoted decades of his life to present the Gospel to Muslims through face-to-face interactions, visits to Egyptian Mosques, publications of apologetic books, internet chat rooms and satellite television.

Fr. Zakaria has been awarded his doctorate in missiology from GMU University. In 2014 he was appointed as the President of Islamic Research at Grace Mission University. Naming him World's 2008 Daniel of the Year, WORLD Magazine described the phenomenal mission of Fr. Zakaria: "What happens when an elderly Coptic priest takes to the airwaves and the internet to confront Islam? Death threats, conversions, and a global following."

"Father Zakaria Botros today is the evangelist with the greatest audience and fame in the entire Muslim world… God is using him to help bring in the greatest harvest of Muslim converts to Christianity in the history of Christendom."

**Joel C. Rosenberg**
Author of "Inside the Revolution"

"*Rev. Dr.* Zakaria Botros is the choicest person in the world who can provide Grace Mission University with the apologetics and polemics tools for Muslim evangelism. He is one of the best persons in the world who can provide GMU with the Bible teaching tools for Muslims."

**Dr. Kyunam Choi Ph.D., D.Miss.**
President of Grace Mission University, Americ

"*Rev. Dr.* Zakaria Botros is not merely an arm-chair expert in evangelism; he has pioneered a global rescue mission that has reached millions of Muslims in the Middle East and around the world. For over five decades, Father Zakaria's passion, perseverance and powerful evangelistic strategies have seen him endure persecution, imprisonments, exile from his home country, death threats and a whopping bounty on his head. Imitating his Savior, Father Zakaria chose to "pay the price" so that Muslims, globally, can enjoy the gift of salvation. His unparalleled research, unmatched practical experience and unprecedented God-breathed fruitfulness will inspire a generation to believe that God can transform Islamic nations."

**Dr. Peter Botross (DEd)**
Co-author of Defying Death

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